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No. I

THE MEDIÆVAL BOROUGHS OF SNOWDONIA

THE MEDIÆVAL BOROUGHS OF SNOWDONIA

A Study of the Rise and Development of the Municipal Element in the Ancient Principality of North Wales down to the Act of Union of 1536

BY

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE following essay is printed in substantially the same form as it was compiled some time ago in candidature for a Research Degree in the University of London. It is an extension and amplification of a dissertation on 'The Municipal Element in the Principality of North Wales' which was approved for the M.A. Degree in the University of Wales in June 1902. The essay embodies some of the results of my work in Welsh History as a Research Fellow of the University of Wales, 1902-1905.

My thanks are especially due to Mr. Hubert Hall of the Public Record Office, not only as Tutor of the Seminar Class for Advanced Historical Studies conducted by him at the London School of Economics, but also as a patient adviser and sincere friend. I am also indebted to Professor Tout, Mr. I. S. Leadam, and Professor Edward Edwards for several kind criticisms and helpful suggestions. Mr. J. H. Davies and Mr. Edward Owen have throughout allowed me to draw freely from their unique knowledge of the sources of Welsh History, and have shown me much personal kindness. I also desire to express my gratitude to the authorities at the Public Record Office and the British Museum for their ready and courteous assistance in consulting the manuscripts in their charge; and, finally, to the authorities of the University of Wales and its Guild of Graduates for enabling me to pursue the work and publish it in its present form.

In passing the essay through the press I have received valuable assistance from Mr. W. P. Wheldon of London and Mr. G. R. Carter of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. Mr. Carter is mainly responsible for the General Index.

EDWARD ARTHUR LEWIS.

University College of Wales,
Aberystwyth, *April* 1912.

OUTLINE SYLLABUS OF THESIS

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[1] Printed in the Rolls of Parliament. The rest have been transcribed from the originals for the purpose of this essay.

THE MEDIÆVAL BOROUGHS OF SNOWDONIA

I

INTRODUCTORY

It is usual to attribute the origin of the town to military or commercial causes, the town taking its predominant feature from the political circumstances of the age as well as from the social condition of the people. A military fortress rudely constructed for purposes of war, when favoured by physical situation and economic condition, readily developed into a permanent centre for trade. It is the object of this introductory sketch to give a general outline of the military and commercial aspects of town economy in Wales from the earliest times to the year 1284, the exact date at which the first of the North Welsh boroughs originated.

The typical town during the pre-Roman period was the Gallo-Brythonic *dinas*.[1] The Ordnance Survey Map of Modern Wales teems with the names of sites purporting to be old British camps and cairns. It is evident from the *locus* of the generality of these, that they served primarily either as the rival fortresses of tribal warfare, or as the common units of a system of military defence. They coped adequately with the demands of the warring chieftain and his semi-nomadic followers, who found their principal food in flesh and milk. The Britons of the interior, according to Cæsar, paid little attention to agriculture.[2] At any rate he hazards the statement that they sowed no corn. The purely pastoral character of their economy is to some extent borne out by the mountainous lie of almost all the British sites in Wales. The choice of site points to no commercial predilections on the part of the founders. The trading activity with the Continent was, of course, mainly confined to the

[1] *Celtic Britain* (J. Rhys), third edition, 1904, p. 299. Cf. 'Early Fortifications in Wales' (S. Baring-Gould), *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1898-9, p. 1.
[2] *Bell Gall.*, v. p. 14.

southern and south-eastern shores. We are told that inhabited towns supplanted the old hill-fortresses in these latter districts about the time of the Roman conquest.[1] There were apparently none of these inhabited towns in Wales, though later Roman towns here as elsewhere arose near to, but not actually on, the old British foundations.[2]

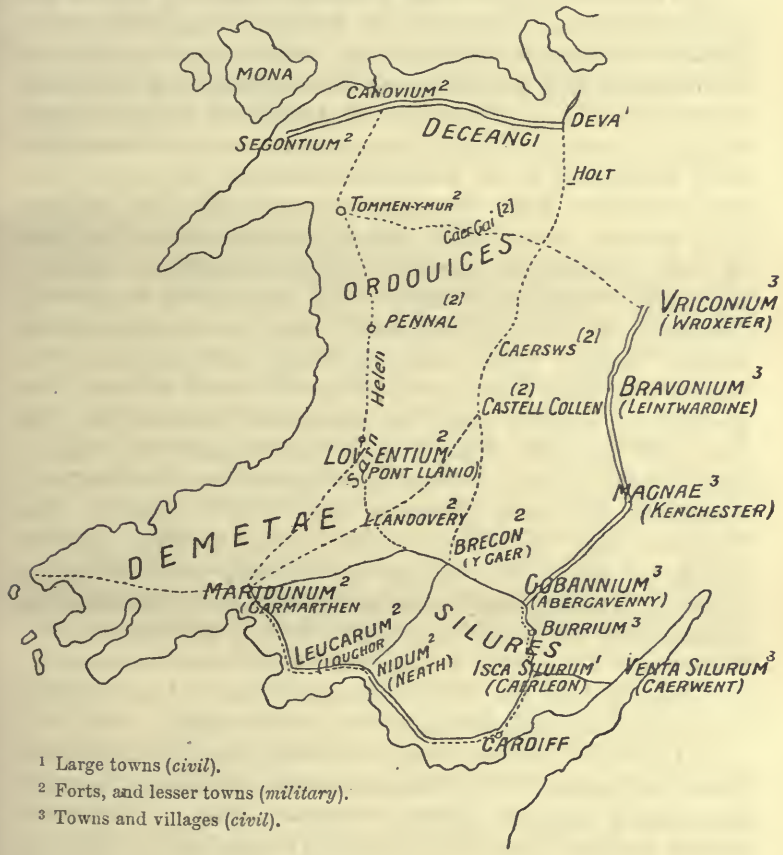
It is not until the Roman period that we have the formation of a political framework that permanently affected the subsequent development of Wales and her towns. The Romans were not so entirely governed by the impulse of war as the Britons, and to them the instinct of commerce was second nature. The Roman excelled the Briton in his choice of site, choosing generally a slightly elevated situation, near a river, rather than the highest point of a lofty mountain. The Roman garrison town had a commercial surrounding. The convenient access of the Roman roads stands out in strange contrast to the abrupt approach of the British trackways.

Britain was not equally Romanised over all its area. Professor Haverfield[3] distinguishes the Romanisation of the Welsh uplands from that of the low-lying country to the south and to the east of Britain. The land now occupied by Modern Wales falls within the military as opposed to the civil region of the Roman province of Britain. Wales, as such, was but little affected by the civil and social economy of Rome.[4] The few extant inscriptions found on Welsh soil bear out this view. There were no Roman towns of note among the hilly fastnesses to the west of a line drawn from Chester through Wroxeter to Caerleon-on-Usk. The Roman forts in Wales were mostly military. Only Caerleon-on-Usk, the home of the second legion, and Chester, where the celebrated twentieth legion was stationed, are credited with any considerable trading activity. Other stations such as Caerwent (Venta Silurum), Carmarthen (Maridunum), and Carnarvon (Segontium), though primarily forts, possibly flourished as lesser marts.[5] The names of the most important[6] of these, together with an approximate outline

[1] *Social England* (ed. Traill and Mann), illustrated edition, 1901, i. p. 15.
[2] *English Towns and Districts* (Freeman), p. 387.
[3] *The Romanisation of Roman Britain.* Paper read before the British Academy, 29th November 1905.
[4] Cf. *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 123.
[5] See map of Roman Wales given below.
[6] See *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1908-9, for map, facing p. 184 illustrating Professor Haverfield's 'Military Aspects of Roman Wales.'

of the roads connecting them, are given in the following map of Roman Wales.[1]

The influence of the Roman domination, so far as the story of our Welsh boroughs is concerned, must be limited to such



[1] Large towns (*civil*).
[2] Forts, and lesser towns (*military*).
[3] Towns and villages (*civil*).

facilities of foundation as were offered by the ancient sites, and the transport advantages afforded by the old Roman roads. There is no direct connection between the 'old towns' of Roman

[1] Places marked [2] are taken from the conjectural map of Roman Wales given in *Arch. Camb.*, iii. 6 (facing p. 186), as are the dubious trackways that connect them. The character and situation of the remaining places are based on Haverfield's maps of Roman Britain. (1) *Historical Atlas of Modern Europe* (ed. R. L. Poole), Part i. (1896), No. 15. (2) *Social England* (ed. Traill and Mann, 1901), vol. i. (frontispiece).

Wales and the 'new towns' or 'boroughs' of the Middle Ages that flourished on what, in many cases, must have been almost identical sites. A comparison of the above map with that given on p. 18 below will show some parallels in this respect.

The Romano-British towns of Wales shared the fate of the generality of such foundations in Britain. These are reputed to have suffered a widespread decay owing to the departure of the Romans and the disturbing circumstances accompanying the Saxon conquest of Britain.[1] Town life was rudely checked, especially perhaps in Wales,[2] where the native tribes were likely to be less versed in the working of municipal institutions than the inhabitants of the civil region of Roman Britain.[3] The old sites, whether town or fort, seem to have fallen into the hands of rival chieftains for purposes of military defence; most of them appear with native names in the list of towns supplied by Nennius.[4] Gerald the Welshman, writing at the close of the twelfth century, gives some interesting information on the condition of some Roman towns in the Wales of his time. He particularly notices Caerleon, favourably situated on the Usk, with the many vestiges of its former splendour. Among other tokens of its ancient magnificence he includes wonderful aqueducts, hot baths, theatres, and relics of temples. The walls enclosing the city were only partly standing when he visited the spot.[5] He also found the brick walls of Roman Carmarthen in a similarly decaying condition.[6] Gerald mentions the castles of Carnarvon and Neath,[7] but is silent as to their Roman associations. In the cases of Caerleon and Carmarthen [8] he doubtless describes the twelfth-century stage of a decay that had originated in the early days of the fifth century.

Of town life in Wales during the Dark Ages little is known. From the departure of the Romans to the arrival of the Normans the country made no marked economic advance. The native princes and their respective clans were almost entirely occupied

[1] Green, *Making of England*, pp. 137, 141.
[2] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 123, n. 3.
[3] *Celtic Britain*, ut cit. supra, p. 101.
[4] E.H.S. edition, p. 62. Cf. *Roman Britain* (E. Conybeare), p. 250, where it is *suggested* that the parallel substitution of Roman by English names in England could hardly have taken place if there had been anything like continuity in the inhabitants of Roman towns from ancient times.
[5] *Itin. Kamb.* (Rolls Series), Lib. I. vol. vi. p. 55.
[6] *Ib.*, p. 80. [7] *Ib.*, Lib. II. vol. vi. p. 124.
[8] *Desc. Kamb.*, Lib. I. vol. vi. p. 172.

with war [1]; they had little desire and less opportunity for the accumulation of wealth, and confined their scant patronage of the fine arts to the quasi-military fields of the Muse and Song. The *caer*, which we may regard as the typical Welsh town of the period 613-1080, was primarily the military fort of a tribal people fighting for the defence of their land. The native literature has much praise for the protection of the *caer*.[2] The same fortresses along with the early monastic establishments probably served as the temporary centres of their rude commercial transactions.[3]

The prevalent view is that there are no towns of purely Welsh origin.[4] This statement is true in so far as the privileged status of the important towns of Mediæval Wales was one of artificial creation or adoption, rather than of natural growth. The making of boroughs in Wales originated with the Norman or English conquest about 1080. Up to this time the native economy scarcely required real urban centres, and the outside influences to which Wales had been subjected hitherto do not appear to have given much impetus to town life.

Moreover, it is worthy of note that the Danish pirates, during their raids from the eighth to the tenth century,[5] visited many of our Welsh maritime villages, some of which have since developed into towns of considerable importance. Swansea and Haverfordwest are particular instances in point. These and other towns on the South Welsh coast show a sprinkling of Norse population from the earliest times. The Danes have not left much trace of inland influence in Wales; their settlements were not so penetrating and permanent as were those in England. Danish forts to some extent stimulated the rise of the Anglo-Saxon boroughs.[6] The raths of Pembrokeshire [7] and the cliff castles of Gower [8]—reputed Danish forts—played no

[1] See the entries of the native chroniclers as preserved in the *Bruts* and *Annales Cambriae* (Rolls Series) for the state of Wales from the seventh to the eleventh century.

[2] Skene's *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, ii. pp. 17, 150.

[3] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 127.

[4] See *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, viii. p. 193; *Chester Archæological Soc. Trans.*, vi. p. 2; Freeman's (1) *William Rufus*, vol. ii. p. 77; (2) *English Towns and Districts*, p. 16; and *The Welsh People* (Rhys and Jones), p. 247.

[5] On the relation of the Danes with Wales see *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 125, and notes 3 and 4 at the foot of the same page.

[6] *The Growth of English Industry and Commerce* (W. Cunningham), 1905, i. pp. 92-7.

[7] *Arch. Camb.*, III. v. p. 4; x. pp. 1-13.

[8] *Ib.*, v. x. p. 2.

such part in the rise of the South Welsh towns. Thus from the side of the sea, as represented by the activity of the Danes —the Black Pagans of the native chroniclers—Wales does not appear to have imported any appreciable impetus to the formation of towns prior to the time of the Norman conquest. The same may be said of the town influences which came landwards by virtue of the English policy of conquest.

The policy of the English kings (A.D. 613-1066), owing to its external and military character, produced no great changes in the economy of Wales.[1] At any rate it originated no English *burhs* in Wales beyond the establishment of frontier boroughs at Rhuddlan and Radnor, which were founded consistently with the English policy of border defence.[2] These conditions were suddenly changed with the advent of the Norman conquest. The aggressive Welsh policy of the Norman kings and their feudatories led to a systematic plantation of boroughs in the conquered districts of Wales.

Before detailing the main features of this borough-planting movement in the Welsh Marches under the patronage of the Norman barons, we may briefly review the economic condition of Wales at the close of the eleventh century, before the advent of the Norman or French *bourg* to Welsh soil. Basing our remarks upon the evidence of the Old Welsh Laws, the testimony of contemporary chroniclers, and the later writings of the versatile Gerald, we may regard Wales at this date as a mountainous country divided into a number of kingdoms under the rule of their respective princes. Each kingdom contained one or more cantreds, which in turn were respectively divided up into two or more commotes. The people inhabiting these commotes (administrative districts corresponding nearly to the English hundreds) were mainly engaged in pastoral pursuits,[3] living in family groups according to the traditions and customs of the Welsh tribal system; the free tribesmen occupied scattered homesteads, whilst the unfree classes settled in vills or hamlets containing a number of cottages. According to Gerald, *they paid no attention to commerce, shipping, and manufactures, and possessed no towns*[4]; they were pre-eminently a

[1] Ramsay's *Foundations of England*, p. 284; *The Welsh People*, p. 152.
[2] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1899-1900, pp. 140, 143, 148, 151.
[3] Cf. *Gesta Stephani* (E.H.S.), p. 9; *Desc. Kamb.* (Rolls Series), pp. 179-80.
[4] *Desc. Kamb.*, ut. cit., pp. 200-1.

fighting nation, a people wholly given to arms and the defence of their country, allowing their martial exercises to be little interrupted by civic pursuits.

For the description of something remotely approaching an urban economy we must leave Gerald and turn to the pages of the Venedotian Code of the Ancient Laws of Wales. One passage defines the liability of the inhabitant of a vill in the case of an outbreak of fire thus: 'If a house in a town (*tref*) take fire through carelessness let the owner pay for the two nearest houses that shall take fire, and thenceforward let them pay from next to next as they are bound to do.' [1] The contiguous dwelling-houses are presumably either those of the villein trefs or of the *maerdrev* vills that flourished on the demesne as opposed to the hereditary lands of the several commotes. The normal commote contained a prince's maenor, set apart for the provision of the prince and his household. This home maenor served as the centre for judicial proceedings as well as for the performance of services and dues.[2] The men of the commote, free and bond, were responsible for the upkeep of the principal residence and the appurtenant buildings. At these little capitals, where the life of the several commotes centred, some kind of a town economy must have existed from an early date. Such of them as were favourably situated soon show a tendency to develop on commercial lines. Circumstances connected with the early relations between Wales and Ireland, and the later foundation and upkeep of the new monasteries during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, gave a decided impetus in this direction to several of our Welsh maritime vills. Some of these were further favoured by close and convenient proximity to good fishing-grounds. Others, reaping the advantages of their natural harbours, gradually assumed the name and importance of a port; Towyn, Barmouth, Nevin, Pwllheli, and Llanvaes—maritime vills on the commote demesnes—were apparently towns of this kind at the close of the twelfth century.

It is not clear how or when the inhabitants of the several commotes came to carry on their trading transactions at their respective centres. The process presumably originated with

[1] *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales* (Rec. Com.), p. 126. To avoid confusion with the English manor, the word *maenor* is used in this and subsequent pages to denominate vills that flourished upon the old Welsh royal demesnes.

[2] *The Tribal System in Wales* (F. Seebohm), pp. 26, 164.

attendance at an occasional fair, which seems to have been the sole avenue of commercial exchange in the purely Welsh districts of North Wales at the close of the thirteenth century.[1] Regular markets were confined to the districts of the Marches owing allegiance to the English Crown.[2] The exchange trade of the districts of Cardigan and Carmarthen, which remained almost entirely in Welsh hands until the last quarter of the thirteenth century, was carried on by a number of chensers, residing on the demesne maenors of their respective commotes, and paying a nominal rent in respect of their privilege of trading. Each commote apparently had its quota of buyers and sellers, who paid their periodic visits to the important fairs held in the Marcher districts. An entry in one of the earliest chamberlain accounts of West Wales goes to show that at Conwil Elvet, where several Carmarthen chensers were wont to reside, it was customary to collect the tolls due from traders passing through the local commote, apparently a *tolnetum patriae* such as was levied in the Marcher lordships, and generally accounted along with the market issues of the local borough.[3] In the Report of the Municipal Commissioners of 1835 it is stated that the *transitum* tolls of the commote or manor of Cyveiliog were collected at the town of Machynlleth. It would appear from this that by the close of the thirteenth century the commercial economy of the Welsh commote was to some extent fashioned on feudal lines after the example of the Norman lordship. The appearance of chensers in the rural maenors of North Cardiganshire may be connected with the foundation of boroughs in the Marcher districts. As a rule, the Marcher boroughs included quite a number of *censarii*. It is somewhat significant that we have no mention of this class of traders in the purely Welsh commotes of North Wales, nor have we any trace of the commote *transitum* toll. At the commote centres of Ceredigion and Carmarthen taverners in addition to chensers made their home, the price of beer yielding good profits to the local lord.[4]

It would be interesting to know how far the demesne maenors

[1] See below, p. 176. [2] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 131.
[3] *E.g.* at Builth and Knighton.
[4] *Min. Acc.* 1218, No. 1, the earliest chamberlain account for the district of South and West Wales. The particulars relating to the *censarii* of the Cardigan and Carmarthen districts are based entirely on the evidence contained in this account, which runs from Michaelmas 1300 to Michaelmas 1301.

of the purely Welsh districts of Gwynedd, Ceredigion, and the Vale of Tywi developed on the lines of the *burgus* of the Marcher districts before the English conquest of 1282. Those of Carmarthen and Cardigan, as we have already seen, harboured chensers and taverners. Llandovery,[1] Dryslwyn,[2] and Old Dynevor,[2] with their burgage tenants paying fixed rents, show traces of development on Norman lines, and the towns of Lampeter[2] and Trevilan,[2] demesne maenors in the district of Mid-Cardigan, show a burgess populace in the early years of the fourteenth century.

In Gwynedd, *i.e.* the district of North Wales, there were apparently towns of a sort before the final conquest in 1282. The Welsh *Brut* under the year 1263 relates of the burning of some of the towns (*trefyd*) of Gwynedd by Prince Edward. Were these *towns* something more than villein trefs with their contiguous dwelling-houses, or the vills adjoining the principal residences of the native chieftains?[3] There is no contemporary evidence to help us much in determining their character and constitution. From data of a later period, however, it may be surmised that almost all the demesne maenors of Gwynedd, favourably situated on the coast between the rivers Dovey and Conway, flourished as trading centres long before their endowment with the privileges of the English *liber burgus*.

Conway traces its commercial growth from the date of the foundation of the abbey. An early extent of the county of Carnarvon taken in 1284[4] returns the value of the *burgus* of the maenor of Carnarvon at six pounds besides the incidental tolls accruing from the annual fairs and the local port. In the same document the little herring towns of Nevin and Pwllheli are each represented as having their *burgus* and local mart. The extent of Nevin comes under the Latin heading, *extenta manerii de Nevyn cum maerdredo burgi*. These instances almost warrant the conclusion that the North Welsh princes had made it a custom to bestow commercial privileges upon the inhabitants of the *maerdrevs* of their demesnes. Examples of lavish grants

[1] *I.P.M.*, 27 Edward I., No. 55, taken on the death of John Giffard in 1299, contains the earliest detailed description of the borough.

[2] *Min. Acc.* 1218, No. 1.

[3] Cf. *The Welsh People*, p. 248.

[4] The original extent is now lost, but its actual data are preserved in accounts of a later date. The evidence quoted here is taken from *Min. Acc.* 1171/7. Cf. ch. iv. below *s.n.* Nevin and Pwllheli.

of commercial privileges to representative religious houses by the native princes of purely Welsh districts are common. It is highly probable that they would have been similarly disposed towards the tenants upon their own demesnes. That they actually did this is tolerably certain, but there is no extant evidence to indicate the period at which this policy was begun. In the case of monastic institutions such grants date from the twelfth century.

Miss Angharad Llwyd, in her *History of Anglesea*,[1] quoting a text in the *Red Book of Hergest* as her authority, refers to the destruction of Llanvaes in 1211, from which the author infers that there must have been a town of some note there in the time of Llywelyn the Great. Llanvaes, we know, was a considerable town at the time of the Welsh conquest in 1282. Edward I., at the special request of his Queen, Eleanor, regranted and confirmed the old privileges enjoyed by the inhabitants. The petition[2] which the latter subsequently presented to the King, touching their forced removal for political reasons to the royal demesne of Rhosfair, is of great interest. It contains one remarkable item, in which the burgesses complain that they were deprived of the privileges granted them *by the charters of their princes*. The most important of these time-old immunities comprised liberty to buy and sell, the enjoyment of all profits coming from merchant-ships and herring-boats calling at the local port, and the use of the demesne pastures for the sustenance of their stock.

The above petition, like the contemporary survey of the town of Llanvaes,[3] gives no hint as to the existence of a municipal institution. The impression left by a perusal of the earliest evidences available for the maritime *burgi* of North Wales is that they were simple maenorial vills, gradually acquiring a commercial character by virtue of the traffic of their local ports and the exchange business of the occasional fairs that were held in them. The appearance of burgages at Llanvaes, Nevin, and Pwllheli is probably in some way connected with the trading activity of these towns. It is a moot point as to whether we are, on the one hand, to attribute the presence of burgages at places like Nevin and Pwllheli to direct or indirect Norman influences; or, on the other hand, to regard their existence as

[1] Pp. 167, 252.

[2] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O), No. 2803. Full text given in the Appendix below.

[3] See Seebohm's *Tribal System in Wales*, Appendix A (*a*), pp. 3-4.

the natural transformation of an older Welsh tenure, in response to the demand for a distinctive town economy consequent to the advent of trade to the North Welsh coast from about the middle of the twelfth century. Of one thing we may be sure, the burgages of these towns are natural burgages; they are not of the artificial cut-and-dried Breteuil type of burgage with statutory dimensions. They remind us of the burgages of places like Llanrwst and Abergele, in the district of the Four Cantreds,[1] or again of the burgages of little manorial towns like Towyn in Merioneth,[2] and Trevilan in Cardigan,[3] and the burgages that flourished in the majority of the towns on the episcopal demesnes of the See of St. David's[4]; in short, they appear to be burgages owing their origin to the economic rather than to the political impulse. Burgages of this character will be generally found in those Welsh towns whose beginnings involved little or no displacement of the existing inhabitants; needless to say, they form the exception to the rule in the generality of our Welsh mediæval boroughs, the majority of which in the circumstance of their origin were purely artificial.

In the Middle Ages, we are told, towns did not grow but were made.[5] In reality both things happened, but from the strictly legal point of view a formal act of creation was necessary to give to the borough that status which marked it off as distinct from the hundred in which it was situate. We have no reason to believe that any Welsh prince *qua* Welsh prince ever created a borough in this sense. This is, in a measure, equivalent to the statement generally made that typical Welsh princes never incorporated any towns. Only those Welsh princes placing themselves in the position of Marcher lords were permitted by the Crown to establish boroughs of the Norman or English type, which formed the nuclei of our later-day corporate towns. Llanfyllin and Welshpool are possibly the sole examples of towns that were chartered by Welsh princes and endowed with privileges common to the English boroughs.[6] We have reference to an early borough at Cardigan[7] under the Lord Rhys, and it is very probable that Dynevor and Dryslwyn made burghal

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1182/1 (*temp.* Edward III.).
[2] *Arch. Camb.*, III. xiii. p. 182. [3] *Min. Acc.* 1218/1.
[4] *Black Book of St. David's* (Cym. Record Series), Introduction, p. xxiv. Cf. pp. 63-4 below.
[5] *Mediæval England* (M. Bateson,), p. 125. [6] *E.H.R.*, xv. pp. 317-8.
[7] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1422-9, p. 522.

advances in his day, but there are no traces of any town charters granted by him. The want of charters, moreover, is a charge that can be made against the greater number of the early Marcher boroughs; for example, those that flourished in the districts now included in the modern counties of Radnor and Monmouth.

The right of establishing burghal communities with a certain autonomy of their own was largely exercised by the Marcher lords in consolidating their hold over their estates on the Welsh border. The Marcher lords [1] were responsible for founding nearly all the Welsh boroughs of the pre-conquest period. The story of their origin represents a detailed phase of the Normanisation of the Welsh Marches, which began about 1080 and followed the vagaries of Welsh political strife to the conquest in 1282. The typical *burgus* (which in many cases developed into the full-fledged corporation of later days) thus appeared in Wales as one of the factors in the policy of the Norman or English conquest —a created importation set up on a foreign model, and that primarily with the view of promoting the political ends of their particular founders.

The Norman conquest of Wales, unlike that of England, was not the outcome of a few years' struggle. The mountainous character of the country did much to stay the military aspect of the conquest. Wales was conquered in piecemeal fashion by the sword of private adventurers, who for the safety of themselves and their followers had to adopt the policy of castle-building.[2]

George Owen, the celebrated Pembrokeshire historian, has well described the process in his famous treatise on the Lordship Marchers.[3] Commenting on the origin of the Norman lordships, he goes on to say: 'And the saied lordes, att their first coming to those lordships by conquest, espyenge out the fertile partes in ech countrye, builded their castles for themselves, *and townes for their owne soldiors and countryemen w^ch^ came w^th^ them to remayne neere about them as their guarde*, and to be allwayes ready to keep under

[1] Elizabethan jurists, filled with the legal notions of their age, obviously confound their simple action of founding garrison boroughs with the more complex one of incorporating towns. It is, however, sufficiently evident that the boroughs originated by them were not corporations at all, and that but a small percentage of them made any subsequent development in this direction.

[2] Freeman's *English Towns and Districts*, pp. 15-16.

[3] Owen's *Pembrokeshire* (ed. Hy. Owen), part iii. p. 141. Cf. Clive's *Ludlow*, p. 101.

such of the countrye inhabitantes as wold offere to rebell . . . and by this meanes all the townes and castles in most part of Wales . . . were first built.'

As remarked in the preceding paragraph, most of the Welsh boroughs owe their origin to the castle.[1] The castle attracted people in various ways. Homes were established for its soldiers' families, as well as for the artisans that supplied their wants. Traders were also attracted by the market established there sooner or later by the lord for the benefit of his followers.[2]

A concise list of boroughs, together with a rough map indicating the approximate sites, illustrating the progress of this burghal movement in Wales, up to 1284 will be found at the close of the present chapter. It may be instructive to note some of the more general features of the movement, so that the points of agreement and difference with the North Welsh boroughs may be the more apparent.

Upon comparing the respective maps of Roman (*above*) and Mediæval (*below*) Wales, it will be seen that the Normans, like the Romans, advanced along the low-lying districts, choosing 'the fertile partes.' The result of this movement tended to confine the native population to the hilly or upland districts, where towns could hardly prosper. Town and country continued to be at variance to a late date..

The element of racial antipathy enters largely into the story of the Welsh boroughs. The graphic narratives of the native chroniclers bear continued testimony to the warlike vicissitudes which beset their early career. The burning of castles, the destroying of towns, and the expulsion of motley garrisons appear as normal episodes [3] in the annual programme of events—a feature albeit that was quite in keeping with the military character of the early boroughs.[4] As was the case with the contemporary French *bourgs*, the little garrison boroughs in Wales lay hard by the castle, and were apparently not walled.[5] The latter circumstance made them an easy prey to the fierce

[1] Cf. *E.H.R.*, xv. p. 74.
[2] *Beginnings of Town Life during the Middle Ages* (W. J. Ashley), p. 17.
[3] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 130, ref. 1.
[4] Freeman, *W.R.*, ii. p. 77 ; F. W. Maitland, *D.B. and Beyond*, p. 199.
[5] Town walls do not appear to have been erected in Wales much before the middle of the thirteenth century. Cf. *Little England beyond Wales* (E. Laws), p. 180.

onslaughts of the Welsh.[1] A *Brut* entry *s.a.* 1231 shows the wanton destruction of the borough of Cardigan even to the very gates of the castle. Welsh troops, deficient in besieging apparatus as a rule, availed little against the Norman castle,[2] whence the early burgesses fled for protection in time of war.

An account of the early vicissitudes of the castle forms a normal chapter in the story of most of the South Welsh boroughs. Another common feature is the fact of their vague origin. Some uncertainty, closely akin to that which prevented the grant of definite liberties by the Crown to the Marcher lord,[3] seems to have stayed the lord's desire to endow his burgesses with a charter, giving them a political status with fixed privileges. For example, the castle of Cardiff was begun in 1080[4]; the earliest charter of its borough was nearly a century later.[5] It will be instructive to contrast the case of the North Welsh boroughs in respect of their charter grants.

By the time of the Norman conquest borough-making had become a profession. It was usual for towns in quest of enfranchisement to seek and accept the ruling privileges of older established boroughs. This imitative process, technically called affiliation, has been shown to be one of the predominant characteristics of the Marcher boroughs of Wales. The distinctive burghal privileges which they exercised generally emanated from a common source, due in part to the common function which they had to fulfil, and in part to the dynastic connections of their baronial benefactors.

Hereford is the real mother town of the Welsh boroughs.[6] The *raison d'être* of this is apparent on considering the peculiar character of its early privileges. The distinctive immunities granted it soon after the Norman conquest by William Fitz-Osbern were derivable from Breteuil, one of the Duke's castles, situated on the edge of a forest of that name in the south-west of the Department of the Eure. These laws were particularly adapted for communities of a semi-military and garrison character. In this respect they were eminently suitable to the mounted burgesses of Hereford, and other of their prototypes in the Welsh Marches during the Middle Ages.

[1] *Annales Cambriæ*, *s.a.* 1116, 1193, 1201, 1204. [2] *Ib.*, *s.a.* 1219.
[3] *Swansea Charters* (G. C. Francis), Appendix, p. 137.
[4] *Sic.* in *Brut*, *s.a.*; *Ann. Margam.* (Rolls Series), *s.a.* 1081.
[5] *Cardiff Records*, i. p. 2. Cf. *E.H.R.*, xvi. p. 550.
[6] *Gild Merchant* (Gross), i. p. 257.

The outstanding traits of the Breteuil laws will be found in the excellent tabulation compiled by the late Miss Mary Bateson in the pages of the *English Historical Review*.[1] The laws are traced from extant data—(1) by the evidence of affiliation given in the charters; (2) by the genealogical relations of the benefactors; (3) by an analysis of the privileges granted to each borough. One prevalent feature is the maximum amercement of twelve pence in the case of any offence done by the burgesses, saving the three reserved pleas of the Crown.[2] Twelve pence, too, was the normal yearly rent of the burgage, irrespective apparently of its actual area.

The presence and influence of the above laws and customs are most felt in the mediatised towns (*i.e.* boroughs of baronial foundation) of the Marches. The Customs of Hereford, the Charters of Haverfordwest, and the Preston Custumal supply suitable data whereby the scanty evidence of other boroughs may be classified and traced to their parental origin. The royal boroughs of the Principality of North Wales, which were of a later foundation, yield little constructive matter. But of this later.

1. Lists of the Welsh Boroughs founded before (I. and II.) and after (III.) 1284

I.[3] (before 1284)

Aberavon	Chepstow	Knucklas	Norton
Abergavenny	Cilgerran	Laugharne	Painscastle
Brecon	Denbigh	Llanfyllin	Pembroke
Builth	Dryslwyn	Llantrisant	Presteign
Caerleon	Flint	Llanbadarn-vawr	Radnor
[Caerphilly]	Gannow (Deganwy)	Loughor	Rhayader
[Cowbridge]	Grosmont	Monmouth	Rhuddlan
Cardiff	Haverfordwest	Montgomery	Swansea
Cardigan	Kenfig	Neath	Tenby
Carmarthen	Kidwelly	Newport (Mon.)	Trellech
Cefnllys	Knighton	Newport (Pemb.)	Usk
		Welshpool	

[1] Vols. xv. pp. 73-8, 302-18, 496-523, 754-7, and xvi. pp. 92-110, 332-45, on which these remarks are solely based.

[2] Cf. *Peerage and Family History* (J. H. Round), pp. 181-3.

[3] The boroughs of Radnorshire are included in Table I.; they have no authentic evidences before the latter half of the fourteenth century, but it is tolerably certain from structural and other data that they originated about the middle of the thirteenth century. Caerphilly and Cowbridge appear as *burgi* in the fourteenth-century accounts; they doubtless originated about the same time as the other boroughs of the Glamorgan group.

II.[1] (PROBABLY BEFORE 1284)

Old Dynevor	Talgarth
Llandovery	Llanvaes (*burgus*)[2]
St. Clears	Carnarvon (*burgus*)[2]
Llanidloes	Nevin (*burgus*)[2]
Llanbedr-talpont-Steven	Pwllheli (*burgus*)[2]

III. (AFTER 1284)

(*a*)[3]

Bala	Hope
Bere	Nevin (*liber burgus*)
Beaumaris	Newborough
Caerwys	Newton-near-Dynevor
Carnarvon (*liber burgus*)	Newcastle-Emlyn
Conway	Overton
Criccieth	Ruthin
[Ewloe]	Pwllheli (*liber burgus*)
Harlech	Holt

(*b*) *Doubtful Cases*

Dinas Mawddwy[4]	Llanelly (burgages)[5]
Fishguard[4]	Trevilan[5]
Abergele (burgages)[5]	Crickhowell[4]
Llanrwst (burgages)[5]	[Machynlleth][6]
[Newtown][6]	

[1] The earliest evidence available for the *burgi* included in Table II. belongs to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

[2] See p. 9 above. Cf. Table III. (*a*) below.

[3] The original charters of these boroughs belong to 1284 and later. Ewloe is nominally styled a *burgus* in a Court Roll of the close of the reign of Edward I.

[4] Styled corporations in the Report of 1835. Origin and history doubtful.

[5] Called *burgi* in the fourteenth-century accounts. They were apparently maenorial vills (with burgages) where fairs were occasionally held.

[6] There is no mediæval evidence to show that they were *burgi*. Newtown, possibly an early foundation of the Mortimers, had traditions of a corporate charter in 1835. Machynlleth enjoyed market and fair rights in 1280.

2. A Table showing the Relation of Hereford to some of the Welsh Boroughs in the preceding List [1]

HEREFORD.

- Cardiff (*Cardiff Records*, vol. i. pp. 13-14).
  - Kenfig-Aberavon (*Arch. Camb.*, III. vi. p. 19).
  - Llantrisant (*Arch. Journal*, XXXV. p. 6).
  - Neath (*Carta et Munimenta* (Clark), ii. p. 55).
- Carmarthen (Duncombe's *Hereford*, vol. i. p. 329).
  - Laugharne (*Arch. Camb.*, IV. ix. p. 100).
  - Cardigan (Gross, *Gild Merchant*, ii. p. 359).
- Haverford (*E.H.R.*, xv. p. 515).
- Montgomery (Gross, *op. cit.*, i. p. 250).
  - Gannow (*E.H.R.*, xvii. p. 287).
  - Llanbadarn-vawr (*Arch. Camb.*, IV. iv. p. 471).
- Brecon (Jones's *Breconshire*, p. 74).
- Builth (Gross, *op. cit.*, ii. p. 356).
- Denbigh (Gross, *op. cit.*, i. p. 262).
  - Ruthin (Gross, *op. cit.*, i. p. 252).
- Rhuddlan (*E.H.R.*, xv. p. 306).
  - Flint (*Rot. Parl.*, i. p. 1).
  - Overton (Gross, *op. cit.*, i. p. 251).
  - Hope (*ib.*, p. 245).
  - Caerwys (*ib.*, p. 245).
- Llanfyllin (*E.H.R.*, xv. p. 317).
- Welshpool (*ib.*, p. 318).
- Dryslwyn (*ib.*, p. 303).

[1] For Hereford and the North Welsh boroughs see p. 40 below. It will be observed that none of the Radnor and Monmouth group of boroughs are included in the above affiliated list. There are no charters extant for the Radnorshire boroughs excepting those of the town of Radnor, dating from the reign of Elizabeth. The earliest charter of the Monmouthshire boroughs is that of Newport, bearing the date 1385. The evidence of the early accounts available for these respective groups of boroughs show their 'ancient customs' to be modelled on those of Breteuil and Hereford. It is somewhat significant that, with the exception of Newport, none of the mediæval boroughs of Radnor and Monmouth possessed a gild merchant.

3. Map illustrating the 'Burgi' of Wales during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, showing those founded before and after the year 1284.[1]

The particular interest of the above map for the purposes of our present study lies not so much in its municipal as in its non-municipal features.

It will be observed that the borough element is confined to

[1] In the shaded portion of the map Aberffraw, Llanerchymedd in Anglesea, Aber and Trevriw in Carnarvon, Dolgelly and Towyn in Merioneth, represent places not boroughs where markets and fairs were established subsequent to 1284. *Note.*—Towns with burgage tenements situated on the estates of the see of St. David's are not included.

the Marcher districts, particularly those of South Wales. The rise of the boroughs situated in the diverse lordships was simultaneous with the progress of the Norman or English political conquest dating from about 1080. Towns along the southern sea-board, extending from Chepstow to Kidwelly, claim origins associated with the extensive conquests of the celebrated Fitz-Hamon and his knights. The Pembrokeshire boroughs, farther west, owe their beginnings to the early representatives of the Clare and Martin families, and the settlement of the Flemings under Henry I. The boroughs of the Brecon district present a vague connection with the conquests of Bernard de Neufmarché, and Llandovery, in the vale of the Upper Towy, claims the patronage of the Cliffords from an early date. Carmarthen and Cardigan came into prominence under the care of the Marshals and the protection of King John early in the thirteenth century. The small boroughs of Radnor appear to have originated about 1250 under the protection of the Mortimers, whose interests in the districts of Elvael and Maelienydd were fairly well established at this time. The towns of the upper and lower divisions of Powysland, excepting Montgomery, a Norman foundation dating from the close of the eleventh century, seem to have flourished as boroughs under their native princes during the last quarter of the thirteenth century. The Treaty of Conway in 1277, by adding the district of the Four Cantreds to the English Crown, gave a new impetus to the burghal movement. Most of the Flint and Denbigh boroughs trace their origin to the political opportunity afforded by the terms of this treaty. Subsequent disasters to the national cause, as represented by the policy of the princes of Gwynedd, led to the foundation of royal castles and towns at Builth and Aberystwyth, with the result that by 1282 only the shaded portion of the above map was left without direct traces of English municipal life. The opportunity for their introduction into this district came with the fall of Llywelyn ab Gruffydd.

The area shaded in the map is the old district of Gwynedd minus the county of Perveddwlad and the cantred of Arwystli. Bounded by the sea on the north and the west, from the mouth of the Conway to the estuary of the Dovey, it is roughly flanked on the south and east by the rivers Dovey, Girw, and Conway. By the Statute of Rhuddlan in 1284 the same area was divided

into the ' three thoroughly Welsh shires ' of Anglesea, Carnarvon, and Merioneth, and with the exception of the addition of the lordship of Mawddwy to the last-mentioned county in 1536, its extent has remained unchanged to the present time. In its entirety, as a general administrative and judicial unit, the district is officially described during the later Middle Ages as the *Principality of North Wales.*

The growth and development of the municipal element within the *Principality of North Wales,* from the time of the conquest of Wales to the date of the Act of Union with England, forms the exact scope of the present essay.

II

POLITICAL ORIGIN AND FUNCTION OF THE NORTH WELSH BOROUGHS

THE story of the origin of the Welsh boroughs, as we have already stated, is the story of a detailed phase of the Norman or English conquest of Wales. This conquest is regarded by historians as being both political and economic. One peculiar feature of the North Welsh boroughs lies in the fact that they begin to flourish at a date when the political or military aspect of the conquest was an accomplished fact. This has an important bearing upon their history. Most of the Welsh boroughs founded during the period of actual conflict appear as factors in an isolated policy of conquest, whereas most of the boroughs of the post-conquest period originate as units in an organised policy of consolidation. These latter boroughs represent the factors of English conquest during the period of settlement, when the political history of Wales, from being involved with the disputes of native princes and English lords, takes the more intense form of minor differences between Welsh tenants and English officials.

The period of settlement begins with the fall of Llywelyn ab Gruffydd in 1282. He was the last prince of the unconquered part of Wales. After him no one could plausibly call himself prince.[1] The so-called princes that appear later are the pioneers of a different epoch in the progress of Wales. With the loss of national princes Welsh history becomes less military in character; the local bards, with fewer themes for the eulogy of military prowess, sing less of the battlefield, and gradually betake themselves from the domain of eagle and sword to the more domestic surroundings of the homestead, where the plough thrived and the thrush sang.[2]

The fall of Llywelyn, from the Norman or English point of view,

[1] See *Rishanger* (Rolls Edition), p. 91. Llywelyn was the last Welsh prince to have barons under him.

[2] *Lit. of the Kymry* (Stephens), pp. 473-4.

marks the consummation of the political conquest. Feudalism had at last gained a direct footing throughout the Principality. The 'land of Wales' as parcel of the Marches and of the Principality was in the hands of feudalising agents. The progress of the conquest henceforward depended on the success with which Edward I. would pursue the advantages he had already won in the field. The problem to be solved was one of government rather than of conquest. His policy was to restore, to conciliate, and to civilise. Moreover, owing to the inevitably unsettled condition of a newly conquered district, the services of the soldier could hardly be dispensed with. Accordingly, the governing policy had to be a semi-military one.

The task was peculiarly difficult. Edward had hitherto coped with Welsh nationalism as expressed in the letters and actions of its princes. Now he was confronted by the many grave and serious problems that were presented by Welsh nationalism in its popular and economic aspect. The princes and their policies he had already overcome by a series of successful military campaigns. The civilising of the people and their customs, so eloquently urged by Archbishop Peckham, was the next desired object. This was hard to realise among a people little used to settled control, and with whom the recent loss of national prestige would long continue to rankle. Fortunately the situation was not a new one to Edward. His long apprenticeship as administrator of his own as of his father's lands now served him well. He had long been accustomed to look to the shire system as the remedy for Welsh legal and administrative problems, and the political defence of subjected districts in Wales as elsewhere was a circumstance in which he could claim considerable experience.[1]

To consolidate his hold on the newly won Principality, Edward resorted to the policy of castle-building, and with the additional object of fostering its economic development he established the North Welsh boroughs. Further improvements in the means and methods of Welsh life, he inaugurated with the Statute of Rhuddlan. This statute provided many of the channels through which English law and other influences came to supplant the ancient and less civilised customs of the Welsh. It arranged the old commotes of North Wales into three counties, and gave the district an administrative and judicial system of its own.

[1] *Y Cymmrodor*, ix. p. 213, and *Edward I.* (T. F. Tout), p. 59.

The disappearance of the old tribal mode of living was very gradual. This was particularly the case in North Wales. Feudalising influences had made little headway in this, the most primitive of Welsh districts, during the period of political conquest, save what may be attributed to the development of possible feudal tendencies in the tribal system itself, and to the indirect influences of the development of the sovereignty of Wales on feudal lines.[1] The Statute of Rhuddlan introduced direct feudalising agencies for the first time. The circumstances connected with the origin, as well as the valuable evidence contained in the returns of the Commission of 1280,[2] issued preliminary to the enactment of the statute, deserve a special study of their own. Some of the old customs were abolished, some were amended, and new ones were introduced.

In this way the year 1284 saw a series of new anglicising influences brought to bear on the facts of tribalism in North Wales. These influences continued to operate until the year 1536, when the process of assimilation was deemed sufficiently complete for the purposes of practical union with England. The soldier of the castle, the English burgess of the borough, together with the Justiciar of North Wales at the head of a well-defined administrative and judicial organism, were the official agents appointed by Edward I. to superintend the change. The castle and the borough were the mainstays of English interests in North Wales during the period of transition; this constituted their main political function.

The erection of new fortresses, as well as the reparation of those already existing, demanded Edward's immediate attention after the conquest. Without castles he could have retained but a slight and insecure footing in his newly acquired Principality. Building operations were begun at Conway, Carnarvon, and Harlech towards the close of the year 1283.[3] The Welsh castle of Bere, otherwise called Caerberllan, was already in the King's hands, and repairs were being busily carried on at Criccieth castle, nearly fifty pounds being expended there towards the end of 1283.[4] The castle operations extended over several years, thirty-eight years elapsing before Carnarvon was com-

[1] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1902-3, p. 3, n. 1. [2] *Y Cymmrodor*, xii. p. 6.
[3] *Annales Cambriæ* (Rolls Edition), p. 108; *Archæological Journal*, vii. pp. 237, 239.
[4] *Ib.*, vii. p. 240.

pleted.[1] The works were not always allowed to proceed without interruption.[2] The short-lived revolt of Madoc ap Llywelyn in 1294 led to the foundation of the castle of Beaumaris in the following year.[3]

Local materials were largely utilised in the building, and native labour, paid and customary, was requisitioned.[4] English artisans accomplished most of the skilled labour; two-thirds of the workers at Carnarvon in 1317 were Englishmen.[5] Despite this local aid in material and labour the building expenses were enormous. As much as seven thousand pounds were spent on the castles of Conway, Carnarvon, and Harlech in 1284.[6] Seven years later considerably more than double this amount was expended.[7] The issues of the Principality were not equal to the strain. Church revenues were in some cases appropriated. The emoluments of the Archbishopric of Dublin and of the vacant See of York were specially devoted to this purpose for some time.[8] The cost of the original works, and of the periodical repairs that were subsequently made, generally appear on the chamberlain's roll of the local exchequer of Carnarvon. In some instances the ministerial accounts, with detailed lists of the actual workers, etc., have survived. Such lists throw interesting light on the early peopling of the North Welsh boroughs.

The contemporary English chroniclers are emphatic as to the purpose for which these Edwardian castles were so elaborately built. The strong castle [9] of Conway in the north, like the remarkable castle [10] of Llanbadarn on the northern skirt of South Wales, was constructed to coerce the attacks of the Welsh, and later the same annalists say that the fair castle [11] of Beaumaris was erected to crush the insolence of the Welshmen of Anglesea.

[1] *Arch. Jour.*, vii. p. 256. [2] *Chron. Hemingburgh* (E.H.S.), pp. 57-9.
[3] See note 11 below.
[4] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. pp. 140, 144. Cf. Pennant's *Tours* (ed. Rhys), ii. p. 393.
[5] *Arch. Jour.*, vii. p. 255.
[6] *Ib.*, p. 240. [7] *Ib.*, p. 242.
[8] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1281-92, pp. 149, 193. Cf. *Arch. Jour.*, vii. p. 236. Hartshorne rightly confutes the idea that the revenues of York were devoted to this purpose for the space of seven years; but Church revenues were evidently used.
[9] *Rishanger* (Rolls Edition), p. 105, 'ad irruptiones Wallensium compescendas.' Cf. *Trivet.* (E.H.S.), p. 308.
[10] *Ib.*, p. 91, 'ad cohibendum irruptiones Wallensium.' Cf. *Trivet.*, p. 298. The castle was not denominated Aberystwyth until the fifteenth century.
[11] *Ib.*, p. 148, 'ad compescendas Wallensium insolentias.'

The Edwardian castles, owing to their concentric character, were admirably adapted for a policy of defence.[1]

The castles were at first adequately manned with defensible men. Some idea of the number and nature of the original garrisons may be inferred from the following extracts, taken from the Welsh Rolls of the successive years 1283 and 1284. These *Rotuli Walliae*, as a class, deal almost exclusively with matters of Welsh interest passing under the Great Seal during the last quarter of the thirteenth century. In tabular form the early garrisons appear thus :—

Name of Castle.	Date.	Garrison.								Name of first Constable.	Constable's Yearly Fee.
		Total.	Including								
		Homines defensabiles (Garrison men).	Balistarii (Cross-bowmen).	Attilliator (Superintendent of arms).	Capellanus.	Cementarius.	Carpentarius.	Faber.	Residui.[2]		
Conway, .	1283-4	30	15	1	1	1	1	1	10	William Sikun	£190
Carnarvon,	1283-4	40	15	1	1	1	1	1	20	Thomas de Maydenhaache	£130
Bere, . .	1283-4	40	15	1	1	1	1	1	20	Walter de Huntrecombe	£130
Harlech, .	1283-4	30	10	1	1	1	1	1	15	Hugh de Weonkeslow	£100
Criccieth, .	1283-4	30	10	1	1	1	1	1	15	W. de Leyburn	£100
Beaumaris, .	1295	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	W. de Felton	...

The North Welsh castles were seldom so strongly garrisoned as they appear to be in the above table. With the advance of the fourteenth century, the administrative staff, here so elaborate, is much simplified, and the numbers of the castle

[1] *Med. Milit. Arch.* (Clark), i. pp. 157-8 ; ii. p. 72. Cf. Tout's *Edward I.*, pp. 309, 453.

[2] *Residui* included amongst others the 'custos victualium' (caretaker of the provisions), janitor (doorkeeper), 'vigilatores' (sentinels), etc.

garrisons vary considerably with the political temper of the times.[1]

Owing to the precarious state of political feeling in North Wales (a phenomenon, by the way, frequently tested by royal commissions during the Middle Ages), the military efficiency of the castle demanded the careful and continued attention of the English Government. Constable fees, with occasional wages for soldiers making up the military complement of the castle, were in annual demand. The buying and repairing of military armour and weapons made the yearly drain on the local exchequer considerably greater.[2] But the most embarrassing, and certainly the most important problem of the castle economy was the effective victualling of its men. A brief consideration of some of the means adopted to secure ample supplies will help us to appreciate the true position of the castle and the borough in their inter-relation (1) to one another, and (2) to the surrounding district in which they were located.

One of the fixed principles of English policy in the Principality during the period of settlement was that the emoluments of office and other expenses relevant to its adequate administration, should (as far as possible) be borne out of the issues, profits, and customs of the Principality itself. This is instanced very plainly in one of the provisions made for the sustenance of the North Welsh castles.

In the local manorial accounts,[3] the earliest of which belongs to the post-conquest period, the *rhingylls* or bailiffs of the several commotes account for a fixed sum rendered annually by the native and protection tenants towards the store (*staurum*) of one or other of the castles. For instance, the bond tenants of the commote of Uwchgwyrvai contribute twenty-five shillings, half the value of three oxen and three cows, yearly to the store of the castle of Carnarvon.

The fact of the tribute being a yearly one, as also of its incidence falling on the bond tenants of the commote, suggests the continuance of the old Welsh customary dues of *dawnbwyd*. These were the gifts of food rendered by the *taeogs* and *aillts*, tenants of a servile nature, to the old Welsh princes and their retinue while on their yearly circuit through their commote.

[1] See pp. 109-12 below.

[2] The extant rolls of the local chamberlain at Carnarvon give the yearly expenses in this respect, e.g. *Min. Acc.* 1213/13.

[3] E.g. *ib.*, 1173/4.

The name apparently given to *dawnbwyd* by the English lawyers who drew up the extent of North Wales was *staurum principis*, the store of the prince. The service is also sometimes described as *staurum castrorum*, the store of the castles; and in the vernacular parlance it was termed *y stor vawr*, the large store.

More important perhaps than the widespread prevalence of *staurum principis* is the fact of its nominal and several apportionment to meet the requirements of one or other of the castles. Analysed as to the place and amount of its incidence, the castles and commotes of North Wales fall into the following groups:—

Commote.	Amount of *staurum domini* or *principis*.	s.	d.	Pro municione castri, de.	Remarks.
Creuddyn, .	Half-value of one ox and of two cows, . . .	11	8		In this table the half-value of an ox is 5s.; of a cow 3s. 4d., 10s., and 6s. 8d. were the normal prices — the other half being paid by the prince.
Ughaph, .	Half-value of three oxen and of three cows, .	25	0	Conway.	
Issaph, . .	Half-value of two oxen and of three cows, .	16	8		
Nantconway,	Half-value of three oxen and of three cows, .	25	0		
Uwchgwyrvai,	,,	25	0	Carnarvon.	
Isgwyrvai, .	,,	25	0		
Dynllaen, .	Half-value of two oxen and of two cows, . . .	16	8		
Kemettmaen,	,,	16	8	Criccieth.	
Eivionydd, .	,,	16	8		
Gafflogion, .	Half-value of one ox and of two cows, . . .	11	8		
Penllyn, . .	Half-value of two oxen and of two cows, . . .	16	8		
Estimanner,	Half-value of one ox and of two cows, . . .	11	8	Harlech.	
Ardudwy, .	Half-value of two oxen and of three cows, .	20	0		
Talybont, .	Half-value of two oxen and of two cows, . . .	16	8		
Dyndaethwy,	,,	16	8		
Talybolion, .	,,	16	8	Beaumaris.	
Llivon, . .	,,	16	8		
Maltraith, .	,,	16	8		
Twrcelyn, .	,,	16	8		

What may be the significance of this external grouping of the commotes into castle groups is not very clear. All the commotes are represented excepting that of Meney (co. Anglesea), which by virtue of its forming part of the dower lands of the dowager queens of England has a somewhat detached history throughout. The commote of Dynllaen is sometimes mentioned as rendering its 'store' to Carnarvon, at other times to Criccieth. The 'store' of Gafflogion is often assigned to the castle of Criccieth, and occasionally indefinitely to the store of the castles in general. This would seem to show that the arrangement was mainly superficial, being little more than a nominal application of the dues to a certain castle. The Norman lawyer, doubtless, found the castle useful and convenient for the continuance of the old Welsh custom of *dawnbwyd*. There was apparently no practical advantage in the arrangement beyond this. The fiscal dues were rendered by the local *rhingylls* to the sheriff, and through him to the local exchequer at Carnarvon. There was no direct payment to the respective castles.

The arrangement, moreover, possibly represents some detailed aspect of Edward's policy of settlement in North Wales. The *staurum principis* bears a striking resemblance to the English custom of castle ward—an imposition laid upon such persons as resided within a certain radius of a castle towards the maintenance of such as watched and warded the castle.[1] The division of North Wales into castelries or castle districts is probably a feature of Edward's semi-military policy of settlement, the supervision of each castle district being delegated to a constable. It is worthy of note, too, that the castle district often corresponded with the market district of its adjoining borough.[2] Corresponding districts such as this, of which we have a few in North Wales, evidently represent some administrative or civilising area connected closely to the castle and borough by military, commercial, and other bonds.

The castelry in North Wales bears in many respects a faint resemblance to the administrative counterpart of the French *chatellenie*. It carries little trace of its territorial counterpart, the *circonscription* or territory dependent on a castle.[3] There

[1] Cf. *Hist. of English Law* (Pollock and Maitland), i. pp. 257-8.
[2] See p. 171 below.
[3] Cf. *Histoire du Château et de la Chatellenie de Douai* (Brassart), p. 10.

was no territorial relation between the constable of a North Welsh castle and the tenants of the several commotes included in the castle district. The constable held no manorial courts. The North Welsh tenants, holding their lands as of the Principality of Wales, made suit at the local hundred and county courts.

Apart from their military significance, the North Welsh castelries appear to have been administrative areas in some matters of justice and social custom: of justice, in the sense that the constable of the castle had the custody of prisoners within its precincts; of customary dues, in so far as it was connected economically with the servile dues of the peasantry inhabiting its district. It is essential to bear this in mind when attempting to interpret the phenomenon frequently described in mediæval documents as *the castle, the town, and the lordship of*, say, Conway, or Carnarvon, etc., as the case may be. These lordships are seemingly administrative rather than manorial entities,[1] and represent the areas wherein the respective castles and boroughs were to carry on their civilising influences.

The castle was thus no mere military bulwark. It played an important rôle in the civil administration of its district, which derived additional significance from its frequent correspondence with the prescribed market district of the borough. In the circumstance of their political function both the castle and the borough were closely associated. Both were the pioneers of English influences during the period of settlement. There was something coercive and economic in the character of both. The military castle had its economic side, and the economic borough had its extraordinary military functions.

The efficient victualling of the North Welsh castles, dependent mostly on foreign marts, must have formed one of the primary incentives to the establishment of borough towns. It is evident from the various items that go to make up the purchases of the castle garnishment (*empcio garnesturae*), that the newly founded boroughs of North Wales played a significant part in the victualling process. This continued to be a feature of their political function during the period of this essay. The burgesses of Beaumaris, when they found them-

[1] Like those of the Marcher districts of, say, Kerry and Kedewain, Cyveiliog, and Arwystli.

selves hard pressed by the influx of Welsh burgesses towards the close of the fourteenth century, distinctly state that Edward I., from the consideration of peace in the parts of Anglesea, constructed the castle of Beaumaris there; and *for the munition of the said castle* he ordained the town of Beaumaris to be near by it, whither English folk, to whom he nominally granted the monopoly of burgess-ship, came to reside.

In regard to the motive and the circumstances attending their origin, the boroughs of North Wales belong to a category of boroughs especially characteristic of the thirteenth century. From about 1230 to 1350 the sovereigns of France and their chief feudatories, notably the English kings who were also Dukes of Gascony, improved their dominions and strengthened their political hold over subjected districts by the establishment of a number of towns styled *bastides* or *villes neuves*. Count Alphonso of Poitiers was an eminent *bâtisseur*, and King John, Henry III., and Edward I. founded many *villes neuves* in Guienne and Gascony. Edward I. wisely applied this policy of town-building to similar conditions in his newly conquered district of North Wales, and, as in his dominions across the sea, arranged that the new boroughs contributed *au maintien de la domination anglaise*.[1]

[1] See *Essai etc. sur les Bastides* (A. Curie-Sembres, 1880) and chs. iv. and v. below for the structural and institutional relations of the North Welsh boroughs to their Continental prototypes.

III

INCEPTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE NORTH WELSH BOROUGHS

The story of the creation of boroughs in the Principality of North Wales is the story of the grant of their original charters. The reign of Edward I. was a prolific period[1] in the creation of boroughs. Towns were essential factors in his general policy of consolidation in England, and their extension to Wales was assured by their peculiar aptness to meet the political and economic needs of the Principality at that date.[2]

Circumstances connected with the problems of political government in North Wales, already related,[3] induced Edward to establish the five castellated boroughs of Carnarvon, Conway, Criccieth, Bere, and Harlech immediately after the conquest. The perturbed state of political feeling in Anglesea, coming to a head in the denizen revolt of Madoc ap Llywelyn, led to the immediate origin of the castle borough of Beaumaris, and subsequently to the enfranchisement of the borough of Newborough in the same county.[4] The borough of Bala traces its political inception to the disordered state of the commote of Penllyn towards the end of the reign of Edward II.[5] The twin boroughs of Nevin and Pwllheli[6] owe their origin to the Black Prince, who, out of regard for the military exploits in the parts of Gascony of one Nigel de Lohereyn, a member of his bodyguard, made him a grant of the maenors of Nevin and Pwllheli, which by way of further compliment he created free boroughs.

The burghal communities recognised the value of the ruling charters obtained in this way. The circumstances of their first enfranchisement were not readily forgotten. The tradition

[1] *English Town Life in the Fifteenth Century* (A. S. Green), p. 11.
[2] Cf. *Y Brython* for 1859, p. 62.
[3] Ch. ii. above.
[4] See ch. iv. below, *s.n.*
[5] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 174.
[6] See pp. 56-7 below. Cf. Pennant's *Tours* (ed. Rhys), ii. p. 366.

of their charter day was a matter of common talk handed down from father to son. It was the red-letter day of their birth into the possibilities of a corporate existence. The charter was the most highly prized of municipal documents. This the burgesses confidently produced when their privileges were challenged by an exacting minister, or when their rights were violated by a usurping neighbour.[1]

With the object of preserving the integrity of the original charter, it was the usual custom on the demise of a sovereign to present it for the approval or confirmation of his successor. By way of courtesy the burgesses in return officially made fine, or, in modern terms, paid a nominal sum of money into the King's hanaper. This process of confirmation sometimes went through the preliminaries of a petition to the King and his council, followed by the usual order to the burgesses to appear at the chancery with their charter and make fine.[2]

There was apparently no legal necessity for the continual renewal of the old charters. However, by force of habit, it assumed some importance. The exercise of the custom in 1376 was deemed to be salutary to the integrity of the British municipalities.[3] Its continuance was not likely to prove irksome to the Crown so long as it made small additions to the royal revenues. A learned Welsh lawyer of the late sixteenth century seems to have thought that the confirmation even of a fee-farm charter was necessary to validate the burgesses' claims to their lands.[4] Fee-farm grants, moreover, generally held good for ever, and they were seldom confirmed, as may be seen from the accompanying list. The amounts paid on the confirmation of previous charters vary from a minimum of ten shillings to a maximum of five marks.[5]

The regularity with which the North Welsh borough charters were confirmed is illustrated in the following complete list of charters granted to these boroughs during the period 1284-1536. The value of the charters in this list for the purpose of burghal history is not so considerable as its length would lead us to suppose.

[1] E.g. *Rec. of Carn.* (P.Q.W. proceedings *passim*).
[2] See *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 223, and *Rot. Parl.*, i. p. 373*a*, for instances of this.
[3] *Rot. Parl.*, ii. p. 332*a*.
[4] *Exchqr. Deposn.*, 11 Charles I., Easter, No. 31.
[5] The sums paid are noted at the close of the confirmation charters.

Name of Town.	Date of Original Charter.	List of Charters and their subsequent confirmations, etc.
Carnarvon,	1284	(*a*) Flint, 8 Sept., 12 Edw. I.—Ch. Roll, No. 12; Welsh Roll, 12 Edw. I., m. 3. (*b*) London, 25 May, 34 Edw. I. Confirmation of (*a*) by Edward, Prince of Wales (afterwards Edw. II.).—Rec. of Carn., pp. 185-6. (*c*) Waltham H. C., 26 Jan., 5 Edw. III. Inspeximus and Confirmation of (*b*).—Ch. Roll, No. 89. (*d*) Westminster, 3 June, 2 Ric. II. Inspeximus and Confirmation of (*c*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 6. (*e*) Kenyngton, 1 March, 1 Hen. IV. Inspex. and Conf. of (*d*) by Henry V. as Prince of Wales.—Ref. (*g*) below. (*f*) Westminster, 10 November, 4 Hen. VI. Inspex. and Conf. of (*e*).—Ref. (*g*) below. (*g*) Westminster, 28th Sept., 8 Edw. IV. Inspex. and Conf. of (*f*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 7. (*h*) Westminster, 26 Nov., 1 Edw. VI. Inspex. and Conf. of (*g*).—Conf. Roll, p. 1, m. 5. (*i*) Westminster, 31 May, 1 Eliz. Inspex. and Conf. of (*h*).—Conf. Roll, 1 Eliz., p. 1, m. 23. (*j*) Westminster, 4 June, 1 Eliz. Inspex. and Conf. of (*a*). ('De executione pro villa Kaernervan,' marginal heading.) — Pat. Roll., p. 1, m. 19.
Conway, .	1284	(*a*) Flint, 8th Sept., 12 Edw. I.—Ch. Roll, No. 15; Welsh Roll, 12 Edw. I., p. 5, m. 4. (*b*) Westminster, 12 March, 9 Edw. II. (Fee-Farm).—Orig. Roll, n. 18. (*c*) Windsor, 20 Feb., 5 Edw. III. Inspex. and Conf. of (*a*).—Ch. Roll, No. 82. (*d*) Westminster, 3 June, 2 Ric. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*c*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 3. (*e*) Westminster, 23 Nov., 1 Hen. IV. Inspex. and Conf. of (*d*) by Henry V. as Prince of Wales.—Ref. (*f*) below. (*f*) Westminster, 17 Nov., 4 Hen. VI. Inspex. and Conf. of (*e*).—Pat. Roll, p. 1, m. 16. (*g*) Westminster, 9 Feb., 4 Edw. IV. Inspex. and Conf. of (*f*).—Pat. Roll, p. 3, m. 5. (*h*) Westminster, 28 June, 1 Ric. III. Inspex. and Conf. of (*g*).—Conf. Roll, p. 1, n. 5. (*i*) Westminster, 31 Jan., 4 Hen. VII. Inspex. and Conf. of (*h*).—Conf. Roll, p. 2, n. 14. (*j*) Westminster, 7 March, 1 Hen. VIII. Inspex. and Conf. of (*i*).—Conf. Roll, p. 4, n. 12. (*k*) Westminster, 7 March, 1 Hen. VIII. Inspex. and Conf. of (*b*).—Conf. Roll, p. 4, n. 11.
Criccieth, .	1285	(*a*) Cardigan, 22 Nov., 13 Edw. I.—Ch. Roll, No. 148.

Name of Town.	Date of Original Charter.	List of Charters and their subsequent confirmations, etc.
Criccieth—*continued.*		(*b*) Westminster, 18 Feb., 12 Ric. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*a*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 21. (*c*) Kenyngton, 24 Feb., 2 Hen. IV. Inspex. and Conf. of (*b*) by Henry V. as Prince of Wales.—Ref. (*d*) below. (*d*) Westminster, 27 Oct., 3 Hen. VI. Inspex. and Conf. of (*c*).—Pat. Roll, p. 1, m. 24. (*e*) Westminster, 12 March, 10 Hen. VII. Inspex. and Conf. of (*d*).—Conf. Roll, 6-10 Hen. VII., p. 1, n. 25.
Harlech, .	1285	(*a*) Cardigan, 22 Nov., 13 Edw. I.—Ch. Roll, No. 149. (*b*) Newburgh, 8 Nov., 10 Edw. II. (Fee-Farm).—Orig. Roll, m. 8. (*c*) Westminster, 3 June, 2 Ric. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*a*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 9. (*d*) Westminster, 18 Nov., 17 Ric. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*b*).—Pat. Roll, p. 1, n. 11. (*e*) [Westminster, 23 Nov., 1 Hen. IV. Inspex. and Conf. of (*c*) by Henry V. as Prince of Wales].—Ref. (*f*) below. (*f*) Westminster, 9 Feb., 3 Hen. VI. Inspex. and Conf. of (*e*).—Pat. Roll, p. 1, n. 6.
Bere, . .	1285	(*a*) Cardigan, 22 Nov., 13 Edw. I.—Ch. Roll, No. 150.
Beaumaris, .	1295	(*a*) Berwick, 15 Sept., 24 Edw. I.—Ch. Roll, No. 5. (*b*) Waltham H. C., 26 Jan., 5 Edw. III. Inspex. and Conf. of (*a*).—Ch. Roll, No. 38. (*c*) Westminster, 3 June, 2 Ric. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*b*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 8. (*d*) [Hardelagh, 8 Sept., 9 Hen. IV. Inspex. and Conf. of (*c*) by Henry V. as Prince of Wales].—Ref. (*f*) below. (*e*) Westminster, 5 Dec., 4 Hen. VI. Inspex. and Conf. of (*d*).—Ref. (*f*) below. (*f*) Westminster, 28 Sept., 8 Edw. IV. Inspex. and Conf. of (*e*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 15. (*g*) Westminster, 7 March, 1 Ric. III. Inspex. and Conf. of (*f*).—Conf. Roll, p. 1, n. 8. (*h*) Westminster, 13 Dec., 18 Hen. VII. Inspex. and Conf. of (*g*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 10 (pencil Nos.). (*i*) Westminster, 1 March, 1 Hen. VIII. Inspex. and Conf. of (*h*).—Conf. Roll, p. 5, n. 17. (*j*) Westminster, 20 Nov., 1 Edw. VI. Inspex. and Conf. of (*i*).—Conf. Roll, p. 1, n. 4. (*k*) Westminster, 22 June, 4 Eliz. Surrender of (*j*) and Grant of Governing Charter.—Pat. Roll, p. 7.

Name of Town.	Date of Original Charter.	List of Charters and their subsequent confirmations, etc.
Newborough,	1303	(*a*) [Durham, 3 May, 31 Edw. I. By Edward, Prince of Wales (afterwards Edw. II.)].—Ref. (*b*) below. (*b*) Ffulmere, 27 April, 17 Edw. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*a*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 19. (*c*) Westminster, 8 Dec., 4 Edw. III. Inspex. and Conf. of (*b*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 22. (*d*) Westminster, 3 June, 2 Ric. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*c*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 9. (*e*) [Kenyngton, 27 Feb., 2 Hen. IV. Inspex. and Conf. of (*d*) by Henry V. as Prince of Wales]. Ref. (*f*) below. (*f*) Westminster, 16 Nov., 4 Hen. VI. Inspex. and Conf. of (*e*).—Pat. Roll, p. 1, m. 16. (*g*) Westminster, 30 April, 15 Hen. VIII. Inspex. and Conf. of (*f*) cancelled and returned into Chancery [*sic*].—Pat. Roll, p. 1, n. 3.
Bala, . .	1324	(*a*) [Westminster, 1 June, 17 Edw. II.]—Ref. (*c*) below. (*b*) Windsor, 18 Feb., 5 Edw. III. (Fee-Farm).—Ch. Roll, No. 79, m. 29. (*c*) Westminster, 3 June, 2 Ric. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*a*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 7. (*d*) Westminster, ——, 20 Ric. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*b*).—Pat. Roll, p. 1, m. 34. (*e*) Westminster, 5 July, 3 Hen. VIII. Inspex. and Conf. of (*c*).—*Land Revenue Enrolments*, vol. 213, pp. 142*b*-144.
Nevin, .	1355	(*a*) [Carnarvon, 1 Feb., 12 Principate Black Prince].—Ref. (*b*) below. (*b*) Westminster, 10 March, 6 Ric. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*a*).—Pat. Roll, p. 3, m. 14.
Pwllheli, .	1355	(*a*) [Carnarvon, 14 Feb., 12 Principate Black Prince].[1]—Ref. (*b*) below. (*b*) Westminster, 26 Feb., 6 Ric. II. Inspex. and Conf. of (*a*).—Pat. Roll, p. 2, m. 12. (*c*) [Westminster, 17 Feb., 2 Hen. IV. Inspex. and Conf. of (*b*) by Henry V. as Prince of Wales].—Ref. (*d*) below. (*d*) Westminster, 16 May, 1 Hen. VI. Inspex. and Conf. of (*d*).—Pat. Roll, p. 4, m. 34. (*e*) Westminster, 5 June, 19 Hen. VIII. Inspex. and Conf. of (*d*).—*Land Revenue Enrolments*, vol. 212, pp. 191-2.

[1] There are no separate documents extant for the Charters bracketed in the above list.

It will be observed from the respective dates of the original charters, that the period of inception covers a period of seventy-one years. The creation of the North Welsh boroughs was a sporadic one, the years 1284-5 accounting for five of the ten boroughs that were nominally established. Bere has no history beyond its charter, and so may be dismissed here.[1] All the castle boroughs originate at the close of the thirteenth century, the inception of the four manorial boroughs falling within the range of the early half of the fourteenth century.

As far as geographical distribution is concerned, the county of Carnarvon contained five of the boroughs, Anglesea and Merioneth two each; Carnarvonshire taking three of the castellated boroughs—Carnarvon, Conway, and Criccieth, with Nevin and Pwllheli of the manorial type; Merioneth and Anglesea effected a compromise, having one representative of each, Harlech and Bala being to the one what Beaumaris and Newborough were to the other.

The above charters reveal some notable traits in the status

[1] The site of this castle was mistaken by W. Cathrall (*Hist. of North Wales*, i. p. 190 n.), and W. Warrington (*Hist. of Wales*, ii. p. 280), for Dolbadarn, a castle situated in the vale of Llan-*Beris*. Its real site was upon the western flank of Cader Idris in the parish of Llanvihangel-y-Pennant, co. Merioneth. A few traces of it still remain and it is generally known as Caerberllan Castle (*Arch. Camb.*, I. iv., p. 211; III. ix. p. 189, n. 1). The origin of the castle is doubtful (Clark, *Med. Milit. Arch.*, i. pp. 105, 158). It was one of the strongest Welsh fortresses during the last fight for independence. It was lost to David in 1283, and falling into the hands of the Earl of Pembroke became an English fortress under the supervision of a constable (Walsing, p. 24, *Welsh Roll*, 13 Edw. I.). It was hotly besieged by the Welsh in 1295, from which date it apparently ceased to be a royal fortress. The last constable elected was Robert Fitz-Walter, 28th June 1293 (*Welsh Roll*, 12 Edw. I.). Robert was pardoned in 1298 of arrears due *inter alia* from the castle of Bere (*Cal. Pat. Roll.*, 1298, p. 346). We have no reference to Bere as a fortress after this. The name was sometimes used to denote the locus of particular lands (*Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1902-3, App. 1). The alleged capture of 'Bere' by one David Gough in the time of Glyndwr forms an interesting episode in the vernacular literature. (See *Gwaith Lewis Glyn Cothi*, ed. 1837, pp. 141-2 n.)

The history of the nominal borough is contained within the four corners of its charter. The vill was made a free borough (*liber burgus*) as the rest of the North Welsh boroughs, the constable of the castle for the time, being mayor of the town, etc. The burgesses claimed the privilege of trial by their own ilk between the banks of the Maw and the Dovey. The town was affiliated to Hereford. Edward I. made a personal visit to Bere in November 1284, exactly a year before its enfranchisement. The mayoral list of the borough consists only of three names: Hugo de Tuberville, appointed 3rd October 1285; Robert de Staundon, appointed 28th November 1292; Robert Fitz-Walter, appointed 28th June 1293 (*Welsh Roll*, *s.a.c.*). The nominal town, doubtless, decayed with the castle about 1295.

of the North Welsh boroughs. One outstanding feature of these charters is their homogeneous character. Excepting differences of date and place, the charter of one borough represents the general character of all.

Turning to the superscriptions of the original charters, we find that six of the boroughs, namely, Carnarvon, Conway, Criccieth, Beaumaris, Bala, and Harlech, received their original charters from the hands of an English king. The three remaining boroughs of Newborough, Nevin, and Pwllheli were first enfranchised by a Prince of Wales. Remembering the close connection which existed between the English Crown and the Principality,[1] and also the fact that the princely-founded towns were subsequently confirmed by English sovereigns, we may take one general feature of the North Welsh boroughs to be that of their royal foundation.

In this respect they stand out in clear contrast to the baronial foundations of the pre-conquest period. This is evidenced in the nomenclature of their diplomatic documents as well as in the general character of their history. The superscriptions of all the charters in the above list invariably produce the name of an English king or a Prince of Wales. They lack the baronial character of the parallel documents of the South Welsh boroughs. The family history of their municipal benefactors is not enveloped in the genealogical ramifications of a Clare, a Marshal, a Braose, or a Despenser.[2] The history of the boroughs themselves, too, is much simpler and more uniform. They were the products of the royal hand, not of baronial hands. Furthermore, they were the products of a different era. We miss that period of vagueness between the foundation of the castle and the appearance of the town charter, so characteristic of the baronial boroughs. The castle and the borough in the Principality of North Wales are of simultaneous origin, and sometimes the grant of the borough charters, as in the case of Carnarvon, preceded the completion of the castle works.

The boroughs of North Wales were thus favourably placed as regards their patrons. The Crown was likely to be less prejudiced by those selfish interests that often hampered

[1] Sir John Doddridge, *Treatise on the Principality* (2nd ed. 1714, p. 9).

[2] *Swansea Charters* (ed. Francis), p. 3 ; *Cardiff Records* (ed. Matthews), vol. i., *s.v.* Municipal Charters.

the advance of a baronial town.[1] This is the general distinction drawn in England between the prospective position of royal and baronial boroughs. In Wales the advantage was no doubt modified by the political function which the boroughs had to fulfil.

Royal patronage had done much to favour the growth of the municipal idea in England during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries.[2] It still does much to foster the condition of the *liber burgus* in North Wales during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The advantages accruing to the royal boroughs of North Wales (owing to their peculiar function) are, however, less marked when contrasted with the baronial towns of South Wales, than is the case between royal and baronial towns in England. It shows itself not so much in the check upon municipal life, as in the pronounced predominance given to the royal will. The burgesses were perhaps too conscious of their position, and perhaps too ready to assert their essential importance in Edward's policy of consolidation. The circumstances of their political environment partly explain their slow growth to municipal manhood.

So long as the castle remained an important factor in Welsh politics, the Crown continued to lend a helping hand to the borough. The North Welsh boroughs were children of the Crown in more senses than one. The king was ever their ready benefactor, as far as his circumstances would allow; he strengthened the town walls when demolished by the sea, and repaired the town quays when in need of repair; he respited their rents during the vagaries of war, preserved the integrity of their privileges, and often enacted laws dealing directly with the municipal economy; and he provided free sites for their places of worship. The royal benefactor at all times showed considerable interest in the rise and development of the North Welsh boroughs. The burgesses had sufficient cause to deem themselves '*the friends of the king*.'[3]

Leaving the charter superscriptions, we now come to the body of the charters, all of which predicate that each of the nine boroughs was constituted a *liber burgus*, or a free borough. The

[1] *E.g.* at Kenfig and Neath (*Cartæ et Mun.* (Clark), iii. pp. 49, 58). Cf. *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century* (A. S. Green), i. ch. viii.

[2] Stubbs's *Constit. Hist.* (Library ed.), i. p. 466.

[3] Illustrations of this policy are given in the succeeding chapters (iv.-vii.).

subjoined analysis of the original charter of Carnarvon will illustrate the general character of the municipal constitution of all the North Welsh boroughs down to the end of the Middle Ages.

The aggregate privileges assigned by the original charter to the free burgesses of the free borough may be analysed thus :—

I. Those connected with the government of the town.
   (*a*) Its Administration—the appointment of mayor (except in the castellated boroughs) and bailiffs by the burgesses, and the respective duties of these officers defined.
   (*b*) Its Jurisdiction—the burgesses imprivileged (*a*) to possess a free prison ; (*b*) *to exclude the sheriff* (except in cases of Crown pleas) ; (*c*) to enjoy the privileges of Sok and Sak, Toll and Team, and Infangenethef.

II. Those connected with the ' tenure ' of the town, etc.
   (*a*) All borough lands diswarrened and disafforested.
   (*b*) Residence prohibited to Jews.
   (*c*) Goods not to be confiscated in cases of burgesses dying intestate.

III. Those connected with the business of the town.
   (*a*) Grant of a gild merchant with hanse, etc.
   (*b*) Grant of other trading privileges :—
      (*i*) Custumal—freedom from toll, lastage, passage, murage, pontage, stallage, lene, danegeld and gaywite.
      (*ii*) Jurisdictional—(*a*) Burgesses not to be arrested for debts of which they are not sureties or principal debtors. (*b*) Burgesses should not be convicted except by co-burgesses within their specified district (in case of Carnarvon, district between Carnarvon and the Clwyd), except in cases touching the commonalty of the borough, and then according to the liberties of Hereford.

Such in brief outline were the common privileges enjoyed by all the boroughs in virtue of their original charters. The *non-intromittat* clause exempting them from the sheriff's control,

as well perhaps as the grant of *gilda mercatoria* assured them the essential attributes of a *liber burgus*, or free borough.

The original charter also indicates the source whence other customs or privileges could possibly be derived. Six of the boroughs were privileged with rights of direct reference to the liberties of Hereford, the rest indirectly enjoying the same privilege. Hereford in this way became the mother of more Welsh boroughs.

Hereford	Carnarvon	Bala	
	Conway		
	Criccieth		
	Bere		
	Harlech		
	Beaumaris		
	[Rhuddlan]	Newborough	Nevin
			Pwllheli.

The list is typical of the process of affiliation, showing how a daughter-town became itself the parent of a subsequent foundation, and this to the fourth degree.[1]

The existing muniments of these particular boroughs throw little light on the significance and actual working of the process of affiliation. In England affiliation involved the interpretation of law and custom. The mother-town transmitted to its affiliated members two different kinds of documents: (1) an exemplification of its charter; (2) a certificate furnishing or interpreting particular laws and customs.[2]

We have one possible instance of the first class of documents. In 1303 the borough of Newborough received a grant of the privileges of Rhuddlan, which, however, were not specifically enumerated in the original charter, except by the general words conceding them a gild merchant with hanse, and all other liberties and free customs pertaining to a *liber burgus*, such, forsooth, as the burgesses of Rhuddlan have in their borough. Newborough during the first two years of its existence seems to have had no distinctive name, save that of the manor on which it was partly established—Rhosfair. In 1305 the burgesses ask that they should bear the distinctive name of Newborough, and that they should have the charter of Rhuddlan in all its details (*in puncto ad punctum*). They subsequently received an exemplification

[1] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. p. 144.

[2] *Ib.*, pp. 266-7.

of the Rhuddlan charter, not of the Caerwys charter as was specified in the reply to their petition. Asked about fifty years later to show by what warrant they enjoyed the liberties of Hereford, the burgesses of Newborough bring forward an exemplification of the Rhuddlan charter.[1] This instance is interesting as showing how the affiliating process facilitated the creation of boroughs. Nevin and Pwllheli were likewise founded by abbreviated charters on the plan of Newborough.

Knowing the general character of the municipal privileges granted by English sovereigns and Princes of Wales, let us consider upon whom they were bestowed. The original charters are exceedingly reticent on this point. All, except one, attribute the privilege to the 'men of the vill,' or what apparently means the same thing, the 'men inhabiting the vill.' The preamble of the Bala charter[2] (a charter remarkable in many respects), goes a step further, and ascribes the privileges to the '*English* inhabitants of the vill of Bala.' This is the only mention in the foundation charters of the fact of a burghal plantation of English burgesses.

In view of their political function it was natural enough that the earlier boroughs should take the form of English colonies. Racial sympathy between the castle garrison and the inhabitants of the town proved one of the strong links in the chain of English defence. 'Adventitious' families, the 'Advenæ' of modern genealogists, made up the bulk of the early town population in the castle boroughs. Welshmen were nominally forbidden to dwell or hold tenements within the liberties of the English boroughs.[3] It was no more appropriate to have a Welshman as burgess in the castle boroughs of North Wales, than it was to have a Scot at Berwick, or a Frenchman at Calais. To the burgesses of the North Welsh boroughs, the country populace were nominally foreigners, as they in turn were to the rural folk.

Racial antipathy, intensified by its identification with the enjoyment or non-enjoyment of burghal privileges, gives a peculiar interest to the municipal story in North Wales. The situation was sometimes acute. There was once a loud outcry by the English burgesses of Carnarvon, Conway, Beaumaris, Criccieth, Harlech, Bala, Rhuddlan and Flint against the 'mouths

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 179-180. [2] *Ib.*, p. 174. [3] See below, pp. 230, 256.

and oaths' of the Welsh. It appears that the Welsh paid little regard to those jurisdictional privileges, of which the English burgesses had the monopoly. How disastrous the results must have been, we may surmise from the belief (albeit exaggerated) of the burgesses that, if no relief was immediately forthcoming, there would be no Englishman (alive) in Wales.[1]

The gradual legalising of burghal privileges to the Welsh, concomitant with the subsiding of racial politics, is an important point in the evolution of the Welsh boroughs. Until this is accomplished there is something abnormal about the North Welsh municipalities, though normal enough when viewed in the light of their political function. Theirs is not merely municipal polity. It is inseparably connected with the wider polity of English defence in North Wales. In addition to the local policy of the burgesses of a particular borough, we meet with the more comprehensive policy of the English burgesses in North Wales. In this wider vein the burgesses generally couched the preamble of their petitions when seeking for particular as well as general privileges. The burgesses of Newborough, most of whom were Welshmen, with diplomatic instinct reminded the Black Prince that their town was established for the habitation of Englishmen. In this way they obtained the privilege of electing their own mayor.[2] Naturally the English burgesses were slow to forget their association with the policy of English defence. They clung to the theory of English burgess-ship long after its virtual abolition by the milder policy of the Tudor kings.[3] It is not until they lose their military or racial character, that the North Welsh municipalities are seen to develop on lines of their own, and assume the full privileges and responsibilities of self-government.

The fact that they originated as royal English free boroughs has thus an important bearing upon their municipal history.

[1] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13029.
[2] See below, p. 157.
[3] See below, pp. 271-2.

IV

THE BOROUGHS AND THEIR PROPERTY

The circumstance of land enters largely into the theory and practice of the mediæval borough. The municipal *franchise* or *liberty* was a definite area of land marked off from the rest of the county by its definite metes and bounds; it was the territory over which the burgesses exercised their commercial and institutional privileges. The holding of burgage lands long continued to be one of the fundamental conditions of sound burgess-ship, and agriculture occupied a considerable place in the town economy. The North Welsh townsmen, we shall find, took a vital interest in crops; their chief magistrate or mayor was sometimes a farmer. The history of (1) the acquisition, (2) the distribution, and (3) the tenure and administration of the borough lands, thus constitutes a considerable and important aspect of the municipal story during the Middle Ages.

1. The Acquisition of Borough Lands

Royal boroughs usually flourished on the royal demesne. This was generally the case with the royal boroughs of North Wales. All were established on sites, and endowed with lands closely associated with the royal past. The lands of the old Welsh maenors were in some cases supplemented by the bond and escheat lands of the commote over which the royal will was supreme. The hereditary lands of the Welsh family groups residing in 'beds' (*gwelys*) here and there were seldom appropriated. Conflict with the private rights of the new subjects was best avoided. The municipal lands were accordingly, as far as possible, taken out of the royal rather than the private property of the North Welsh Principality.

The burghal franchises correspond, in whole or in part, with the old royal maenors of the Welsh princes. The aggregate

lands of the boroughs of Nevin and Pwllheli tally with the *territoria* of the old maenors. Borough-making in these instances was simply a case of assigning the privileges of the *liber burgus* to the old maenors as they then existed. There was no creation of a new territorial unit. The boroughs of Conway, Carnarvon, and Criccieth included something more than the old maenors within the area of their franchises, and the liberties of Harlech outstretched the old maenor of Estingwern. Beaumaris occupied something more and something less than the old maenor or borough of Llanvaes. The franchise of Newborough never extended to the wider limits of the demesne lands of Rhosfair, upon which it was established. The demesne lands of the commote of Penllyn, on the eastern border of Merioneth, were almost wholly occupied by the town and liberty of Bala.

The acreage and other details of the lands assigned to the boroughs must be drawn largely from the local bailiff accounts. Charters detailing the original grants of land to the men of the several boroughs are not forthcoming. Probably none ever existed in the cases of Nevin and Pwllheli. The land charters[1] of Carnarvon and Conway are referred to in the early accounts, and the lands of the remaining boroughs are spoken of as being 'delivered' to the burgesses. The original foundation charters in each case imply the existence of an inhabited vill with lands already assigned to it.

(*a*) *Conway*

The town of Conway flourished on the demesne lands of the commote of Creuddyn. Most of these had been included by Llywelyn ap Iorwerth in his munificent grant of lands to the Cistercian Abbey of Aberconway. Two carucates of land with an extensive meadow remained appurtenant to the royal maenor there. The old town apparently thrived under the patronage of the local Abbey. The Abbot's borough, including the site of the Abbey and its appurtenances, was worth £8 yearly at the time of its confiscation. Edward I. utilised its lands and the residuary demesnes to found the new free borough of Conway.[2] A detailed account of the removal of the Abbey to Maynan,

[1] So far as I know, the only extant specimens for Wales of charters of this character belong to the mediæval boroughs of Dryslwyn, co. Carmarthen, and Denbigh.

[2] *Min. Acc.* 1171/7.

and of the territorial exchanges which were necessary to compensate for the released lands, is given on the Welsh Roll of 1284.[1]

The lands appropriated by the borough covered an extent of nearly seven hundred acres. The town bailiffs in 1305 account for the land issues of the borough in this way :—

(*a*) Burgages—£6. 2s. 2½d. being the assise rent of 121½ burgages and a quarter of one burgage, of which 5½d. is for diverse feet of land found on the rental besides the number of the aforesaid burgages.

(*b*) Lands of the Vill—£4. 10s. 8½d. being the assigned (*assignata*) rent of 362½ acres 1 rood of land at 3d. per acre, together with 1d. for the rood.

11s. 5½d. being, etc., of 55 acres at 2½d. per acre.

43s. 1½d. being, etc., of 258½ acres 1 rood at 2d. per acre.[2]

This account represents the normal acreage of the town lands until the particular items become absorbed in the fee-farm rent of the borough in 1316.[3]

In the meantime (1305-1316) the burgesses made strenuous efforts to increase and consolidate their territory at the hands of Edward of Carnarvon. They endeavoured to add the demesnes of the adjoining vill of Gannock to their franchise. In 1305 they sought a grant of twenty acres of land (situated in the midst of their own) held by six of the Prince's villeins there. At the same time they contested the right of the Bishop of Bangor to enjoy two hundred acres of the same demesne. The burgesses were evidently in search of a more extensive and more compact territory. However, nothing tangible came of either of these requests. The *maerdrev* lands of Gannock remained intact, and the bishop continued to enjoy the profits of the demesnes that had been graciously granted to him by Edward I. upon the conquest of Wales.[4]

The same year the burgesses made an attempt to secure the

[1] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1902-3, pp. 40-41.

[2] *Min. Acc.* 1170/5. The 5½d. for the diverse feet of land in the first entry is first included in the account of 1307. The sum total for 1305-1306 being £13. 7s. 0¼d. (1170/3-4). In 1307-1310 it remains as above £13. 7s. 6d. (1170/5-6). In 1313 more burgages are arrented, making the total £13. 12s. 2d., at which figure it remains until its final incorporation in the fee-farm grant in 1316 (1170/7-9).

[3] A transcript of this charter is given in Add. MS. (Ch.) 33,372 (Brit. Museum), f. 3 *b*.

[4] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 222-3.

demesne lands of the hamlets of Lleghan and Werdros, districts bordering on their original territory. Unfortunately the execution of the writ directed by Edward I. to the local Justiciar at Carnarvon, sanctioning the grant of these lands, was stayed because of the exigencies of the Scottish war. This was the grievance complained of by the burgesses in their petition to Prince Edward of Carnarvon at Kennington, who in reply repeated his father's promise to grant the lands.[1] The promise, however, was only partially fulfilled by his grandson, the Black Prince, about fifty years later. The villeinage lands of Lleghan, including four gavels, were conceded to the burgesses on the 20th day of March 1355, at a fee-farm rent of 118s.[2] This was the first and the last addition made to the lands originally assigned to the borough of Conway.

(*b*) *Carnarvon*

The borough franchise of Carnarvon more than doubled the original franchise of Conway in extent. It included the lands of the old maenor of Carnarvon, and of the entire villein tref of Llanbeblig, excepting nine bovates 'beyond the river Seiont.' The maenor comprised six carucates in demesne at Carnarvon, with a meadow and pasture, and an extensive garden of the value of 20s. per annum. There were also three carucates and a pasture in demesne at 'Penthlan' (Penllan), together with an undefined tract of land at 'Pennaghkely' (Pen-y-gelly). The total profits of the maenor of Carnarvon, as notified in the extent[3] of the county taken after the conquest by Edward I., are a little less than £22. 10s. This amount includes the profits of the neighbouring vill of Llanbeblig which apparently formed parcel of the maenor. Among other issues of the old maenor it is interesting to find 'customs of the port 20s.'; and 'Pleas and perquisites of the *Curiarum burgi*.' Carnarvon was a typical Welsh town of the pre-conquest period, having its 'port' and its 'court' like Llanvaes and Nevin. The parcel of the vill of Llanbeblig, not included among the lands granted at a 'certain service' to the burgesses of Carnarvon, produced an annual rent of 5s. 3d.[4]

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 222.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1171/11. A transcript of this charter is given in Add. MS. (Ch.), 33,372 (Brit. Museum), f. 4*a*.
[3] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1902-3, pp. 18, 74.
[4] *Min. Acc.* 1171/8. Cf. *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 22; *Exchqr. Misc.* 7/11.

Excepting the burgages, the total area of the lands which were in this way nominally assigned to the burgesses appears finally as 1464½ acres. Only 1030 acres are arrented to the burgesses in the rental of the town for 1298—the remainder evidently lying vacant in the hands of the king. Seven years later, 1378 acres are arrented to burgesses and others, increasing in the following year to 1444½. In 1339 twenty more acres are accounted for, at which figure it subsequently remains for the rest of our period. In the absence of other external evidence, this amount was presumably included among the lands that were originally set apart for the use of the burgesses. The variations in the amount arrented very probably represent the gradual process of burghal colonisation. Arranged in tabular form they have the additional interest of illustrating the gradual accumulation of the lands into the hands of *bona-fide* burgesses.

Date.	MS. Source.	Lands held by the Burgesses.	Demesne Lands held by divers Persons, among others, Burgesses.	Total.
1298	R. & S. (P.R.O.) 17/84.	1030 acres (*sic*).		1030 a.
1305	Min. Acc. 1170/4.	1229½ acres 1 rood of arable, pasture, and alderland (*alneti*) at 2d. per acre.	121 acres 1 rood, together with 27 acres *alneti* in the hands of the Prince, and let to divers tenants.	1378 a.
1306	Min. Acc. 1170/5.	Do.	44½ acres at 2d. let to divers tenants. 102½ acres at 1½d., because it was never cultivated after the war of Madoc. 60 acres at 1d., *quia alneti*, let to divers tenants. 8 acres at 2d., held by Peter de Hunkelegh.	1444½ a.
1308	Min. Acc. 1170/6.	1330½ acres at 2d.	106 acres at 2d. to divers tenants. 8 acres at 2d., by Peter de Hunkelegh.	1444½ a.
1313-14 -15.	Min. Acc. 1170/7, 8, 9.	Do.	106 acres at 2d. to divers tenants. 8 acres at 2d., by Thomas de Esthalle.	1444½ a.

Date.	MS. Source.	Lands held by the Burgesses.	Demesne Lands held by divers Persons, among others, Burgesses.	Total.
1316	Min. Acc. 1170/10.	1330½ acres at 2d.	106 acres *terræ morosæ ac Kuarres*, granted by John de Havering to W. de Shaldeford to be held at farm by him and others holding lands there.	1444½ a.
1319-1336	Min. Acc. 1170/1 & 1171/3.	1444½ acres at 2d.		1444½ a.
1339-1536	Min. Acc. 1171/4 & Min. Acc. 26-27 Hen. viii. No. 36.	1464½ acres at 2d.		1464½a.

The small amount arrented in 1298 is in some part explained by the table. It was only four years after the revolt of Madoc ab Llywelyn, subsequent to which some of the lands were not cultivated until 1306. The early comers, too, seem to have taken up the best lands; the alder, marshy, and stony (*kuarres*) lands were arrented last. The total of 1464½ acres remains virtually the same throughout. It sometimes appears in a corrupt form, e.g. *Min. Acc.* 1175/1, where 1454½ a. occurs with the money equivalent of 1464¼ acres.

(c) *Criccieth*

The promise of a grant of sixty acres of land apiece had been held out to induce burgesses to settle around the castle of Criccieth. But no burgess apparently occupied more than six acres, and some were left without any lands at all. Such is the general tenor of an early petition in which the disappointed burgesses seek redress.[1] The nuclei of their borough lands were those pertaining to the maenor of Criccieth, consisting of two carucates of land, one meadow, and a pasture sufficient for eight cows.[2] These were supplemented by the acquisition of a vacated patrimony (wele) in the neighbourhood of 'Strinthlyn,'[3]

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 224.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1171/7.
[3] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 41 (modern Stymllyn).

and later in the reign of Edward III. (about 1351), the burgesses are charged an additional rent of 2s. for a certain meadow.

The earliest account giving details of the town lands is that of Robert de Ossilegh and Ralph de Wenlak in 1308.[1] In this year the bailiffs answer for twenty-three burgages with eighty-one acres of land at 1d. per acre. The successive bailiffs make similar returns up to the year 1317, when the burgesses are amerced 2s. by Roger de Mortimer, the local Justiciar, for the concealment of one rood of land within their liberties.[2] Eighty-one acres and one rood are minutely accounted for until 1325,[3] which amount probably remained unchanged. All the accounts subsequent to this date, however, return eighty-six acres one rood, apparently through the mistaken analogy that the number of acres accounted for should correspond to the number of pence in the amount paid. The concealed rood, upon its recovery, was arrented at 5½d.,[4] thereby increasing the old rents of assize for land to 7s. 2½d. Seven shillings odd continues to be the normal issue of the borough lands during the late Plantagenet and Tudor periods.

(*d*) *Beaumaris*

The founding of the new borough and castle of Beaumaris led to the confiscation of the old maenor or town of Llanvaes. A considerable share of the hereditary lands of the neighbouring vill of Cerrigygwyddyl was appropriated for the same purpose. The Welsh townsmen of Llanvaes were removed to the demesnes of Rhosfair, about twelve miles away, and the disinherited tenants of Cerrigygwyddyl were recompensed with grants of land in some of the adjoining vills. The establishment of Beaumaris occasioned a greater rearrangement of lands than was the case with any other of the North Welsh boroughs.

The lands of the vill of Llanvaes, in the Anglesea extent of 1294, are said to contain thirteen carucates of land in demesne, with a meadow and garden, in addition to the burgage holdings yielding an annual rent of more than £8 sterling.

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1170/6. The town was farmed during the years 1305-7. The following note occurs at the foot of this account:—'Memorandum quod villa de Cruk' posita fuit ad firmam in annis a festo Michaelis principatus quinto usque festum Michaelis anno regni regis Edwardi secundo videlicet per iij. annos quibus annis non reddiderunt compotum quia posita ad firmam.'

[2] *Ib.*, 1170/12. [3] *Ib.*, 1170/1, 2, 13-15. [4] *Ib.*, 1170/16.

The mills of the maenor, Llanvaes and Kevyncogh, were not assigned to the burgesses. A little over twenty-two and a half [1] acres remained of the old vill of Cerrigygwyddyl after allotment was made to the burgesses—about a fourth perhaps of the original vill. The total lands of the borough as they appear in the rental of 1305 cover an area of 1486½ acres—1333 acres 1 rood arable; 16½ acres 1 rood meadow; 104½ acres pasture; 4 acres turbary; and 28 acres underwood. Most of these lands were granted to the townsmen, but a considerable amount was annexed to the castle demesne. The representatives of St. Katherine's Church at Llanvaes, and of the Friars Minor established there by Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, had minor holdings in the same lands. These several interests are set out in the tabular analysis of the Beaumaris lands given below.

The lands originally arrented by the burgesses were hardly favourable to their agricultural pursuits. They were partly wedged in between the castle demesnes, which were situated at Llanvaes and 'Fulbrok.' The continual trafficking to and fro by the castle tenants proved detrimental to growing crops on the intervening borough lands. Alive to the advantages of a compact territory, the burgesses begged leave to hold the castle demesnes at a much increased rent. The request is included among the Kennington series of Welsh petitions preserved in the *Record of Carnarvon*, and dates from about 1305.[2] The lands were not granted until May Day 1315, when the burgesses for the first time arrented the demesne lands near the castle at an annual fee-farm rent of £7. 10s. 10½d. In the Easter following they were included in the bailiffs' charge.[3]

The only subsequent addition to the town lands was that of the year 1366, when the Black Prince conceded the villeinage lands of Bodenvewe to the burgesses, at a fee-farm amounting to more than double the ordinary rent. This was the last endowment of the municipal element in the Principality of North Wales. It must, however, be observed that the bailiffs of Beaumaris ultimately (1400) administered the residuary lands attached to the local castle. The franchise of Beaumaris seemingly comprised the entire castle demesnes.

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 74. [2] *Ib.*, p. 223. [3] *Min. Acc.* 1170/10.

Extent of Anglesea. 1294.	Rentals and Surveys (P.R.O.), Roll 767. 1305.	THE BAILIFFS' CHARGE. 1307-1313.	1314-1315.	1316.	1317-1365.	1366-1399.	1400-1536.	REMARKS.
	(a) Town of Beaumaris.							
(a) Llanvaes.	[132½ burgages], ...	[141½]		[148]	[154½]	£6 0 0 (Bodenvewe)	£6 0 0	[1] There is no further material change in the totals constituting this item of the annual charge. The totals, however, are subject to occasional misrepresentation through clerical mistakes. Total (*c*) is written £3. 7s. 6d in accounts subsequent to 1508. The area totals undergo similar corruption. (*a*) appears as 332½ a. before 1459, and becomes 333½ in 1529, but the value total remains stable. (*c*) suddenly changes to 480½ in 1520, returning to the old figures in 1521. In subsequent accounts it appears again as 480½ a. In the Governing Charter (*temp.* 4 Eliz.) the same total is corrupted into 424½ a.
(i) Burgages = £8 8 5½.	276 acres at 6d., ...	332	332	332 = £8 6 0 (*a*)				
(ii) 13 carucates of land in demesne.	247 ,, at 4d., ...	200½	200½	200½ = 8 6 10 (*b*)				
(iii) A meadow.	395 ,, at 2d., ...	397	401	404½ = 8 7 5 (*c*)	£15 2 9½[1]	15 2 9½	15 2 9½	
(iv) A garden.	14½ ,, at 1d. (*in pendente*), .							
	4 ,, at 1d. (small pasture), .							
	12½ ,, at 1d. (marsh land towards Bodegelwyth), ...	30½	30½	30½ = 0 2 6½ (*d*)				
	A curtilage (free).							
		THE CONSTABLE'S CHARGE.						
	(b) Castle Demesnes and Divers Lands at Llanvaes.	1305.	1307-1315.					
(b) Cerrigygwyddyl (*circa*, 85 acres).	278½ a. 1 r. at 4d., . . . £4 12 11							
	23 a. at Cerrigygwyddyl at 2½d., ... 0 3 10		£4 18 8	at 6d. = £6 19 4½ at 4d. = 0 6 8½ at 2½d. = 0 4 9½	7 10 10½[2]	7 10 10½	7 10 10½	
	23 a. 'poor mountain land' at 1d., ... 0 1 11							
				THE CONSTABLE'S CHARGE.				
				1316.	1316-1332.	1333.	1334-1365[3]-?1399.	
	7½ a. meadow (Kingesmede), 1 10 0							
	3½ a. meadow (under the Court of Llanvaes), . . 0 7 0		2 9 0					
	4 a. meadow (near the castle), 0 10 0							
	4 a. turbary, ... 0 2 0							
	28 a. underwood (Coedcadw), 1 0 0		1 0 0			[£1]		
	5 a. 1 r. arable (ecclesiastical fee), . .	£9 10 3½						
	24 a. 1 r. arable (rectors of St. Katherine's) . . 0 12 1½			£5 9 4	£5 13 1	£4 13 1	£4 10 7	
	1 mes. 14 a. of Feliceus ap Hova (let to rectors of St. Katherine's), . . 0 8 6		1 2 7½					
	4 a. held by Friars Minor, . 0 2 0						[2s. 6d. less in respect of lands granted by John de Houson to the Friars Minor of Llanvaes (*Min. Acc.* 1149/2).]	
	109 a. 1 r. lands of one Kend'ap Morvith at Llanvaes (18½ a.), rest at Bodgelwheth, now let to David ap Elgnon, a burgess, ...		0 17 8½					
	9 a. near 'Breimerin' not arrented ('Fulbrok'), ...		0 3 0	0 3 9*	*9d. increment of 9 acres at Fulbrok, let at 3s. to Virico de la Hay (*Min. Acc.* 1170/11).	The wood of Llanvaes ceased to be charged to the Constable, 3rd March, 25 Edw. III. (*Min. Acc.* 1149/1).		0 2 4½

[2] Corrupted to £7.10s.9½d. (1377-1409). Two acres, the vacant lands of one John Hampton, are accounted with these lands in 1414, making the normal total £7. 11s. 3d., which in turn is corrupted into £7. 18s. 6d. (1451-1536). 278½ a. 1 r. is wrongly written as 268½ a. in accounts subsequent to 1377.

[3] John de Sancto Petro, constable of the castle, answered for the demesnes this year (*Min. Acc.* 1150/2). The town bailiffs account for them in 1400.

[4] The bailiffs carelessly omit 7d. in their first return for the castle demesnes, but include it in their total charge. 2s. 4½d. was a new increment due this year from the meadow below the wood of Llanvaes, held by William de Cranewell. This increment was increased by 2d. in 1492, £4. 12s. 6½d. thence being the usual rent. The bailiffs' account of the castle demesnes is distinct from that of the town during the years 1400-1408—in 1409 (1152/4) it forms one of the items in their general account.

(e) *Newborough*

The confiscation of the town of Llanvaes led to the removal of most of the old burgesses to the demesne lands of Rhosfair, or Rhoshir. Some, we know, acquired lands elsewhere.[1] Several have given expression to the hardships to which they were put by their compulsory eviction.[2] The Church of St. Katherine's was considerably impoverished [3] by the loss of its old parishioners. The latter under the leadership of one Anian, a local doctor (*medicus*), were reluctant to leave their old homes; in consequence Anian, with thirty or more of his co-tenants, were fined for their delay at Llanvaes contrary to the King's ordinance.[4]

The burgage lands of the town of Llanvaes, in which the burgesses had apparently a private interest, are extended in 1294 at £8. 8s. 5¾d. Precisely the same amount is returned by the bailiffs in the earliest extant account of the newly established borough at Newborough. Ninety and a half acres, with twelve and a half perches of the demesnes of Rhoshir, were appropriated at one stroke to the use of the borough. Excepting four acres taken up by the 'royal roads' of the borough, the whole of the demesne lands were granted to the old burgesses in recompense for the lands vacated by them at Llanvaes.[5]

The Rhoshir domain contained an area of more than six hundred acres; namely, ten carucates of land (each carucate estimated at sixty acres), one garden, one pasture, and three small meadows. When the burgesses first settled there a considerable portion of these lands were unoccupied. Lands to the value of nearly £4 were in decay after the first allotment was made to the borough. A few scattered tenements, however, occupied by Welsh bondmen, intermingled with the lands of the townsmen, who very soon emulated the burgesses of Conway and Beaumaris in their attempts to consolidate their territory.

In 1305, with diplomatic foresight worthy of larger municipalities, the burgesses of Newborough petitioned Prince Edward of Carnarvon to remove the villein tenants then dwelling in their midst, so that their burgages might be surrounded by certain metes and bounds. They further asked to hold the demesne lands of Rhoshir at a similar rent to that paid by the villein tenants,[6] together with two acres of pasture land intervening

[1] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1902-3, p. 44, n. 1.
[2] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 217.
[3] *Ib.*, pp. 218-19.
[4] *Exchqr. K.R. Accts.* 109/2.
[5] (Before 1302), 1227/4.
[6] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 223-4.

between their territory.[1] A favourable reply in the case of the pasture lands was immediately received, but when or how much of the demesne lands were granted to the burgesses is not clear. A remarkable inquisition taken 22nd March 1333,[2] hitherto misconstrued to imply that the Anglesea burgesses held lands in so far distant a county as Carmarthen,[3] throws some light upon this point. It clearly states that the burgesses normally held of the demesne lands to the yearly value of £7. About one-third of the lands had been badly damaged by a recent storm ; for on the Feast of St. Nicholas, 1331, one hundred and eighty-six acres were so entirely destroyed by the sea and overrun by sand that they were useless for further cultivation—a loss to the local burgesses of £4. 11s. 6d. *per annum*.

After this calamity the demesne lands held by the burgesses were generally assessed at £4.[4] The borough never succeeded in absorbing the whole demesne. The portion of the old maenor not included in the borough was usually called Hendre Rossir. The *puri nativi* of Rhosfair in 1353 held lands to the yearly value of £6. 16s. 5½d.[5] Still, the burgesses apparently acquired sufficient lands to enable them to mark off their liberty by definite metes and bounds. The traditional boundary, annually perambulated by the burgesses, has been minutely described by Henry Rowlands, the famous local antiquary, in his manuscript notes on *Mona Mediæva*, and published in the *Archaeologia Cambrensis*.[6]

(*f*) *Harlech*

The town of Harlech, like its prototype Criccieth, flourished near the site of an old Welsh castle. Its territorial status during the reign of Edward I. is not very clearly defined. The burgesses seem to have enjoyed the bond lands surrounding the old Welsh stronghold, as well as the more considerable portion of the lands of Estingwern, where the maenor of the Welsh princes formerly flourished. This old maenor was demolished at the time of the conquest, the houses were destroyed, and the mill and lands (excepting one carucate granted in exchange to the villeins expelled from their lands at Harlech) were

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 218.
[2] *I.P.M.* (really *A.Q.D.*), 6 Edward III., No. 70 (2nd nos.).
[3] *Arch. Camb.*, III. ix. p. 194; *Calend. I.P.M.* (Rec. Com.), ii. p. 52*b*.
[4] *Min. Acc.* 1152/4, *temp.* 1409.
[5] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 83.
[6] *Arch. Camb.*, I. i. p. 311.

arrented to the burgesses.[1] Some hereditary lands formerly occupied by Welsh freemen, and situated near the castle at a place called 'Towyndresselethe,' were also included among the borough lands.[2]

Moreover, the town patrimony was at best scanty. In 1308 only five of the burgesses held lands and pastures outside the vill. Deficient pasturage was a burning grievance with the local burgesses at this date; they accordingly begged the Crown to mitigate their poverty by a grant of the escheated tenements in the neighbouring districts. The men of Harlech had evidently seen better times. In the course of their petition, they proudly recorded that before 1294, the date of the rising of Madoc ap Llywelyn, they had been accustomed to enjoy the profits of the royal mills as well as the use of the royal pastures in their locality. These produced an abundance of butter, cheese, and a goodly supply of meat. It was on this score that the burgesses so stoutly guarded the castle of Harlech during Madoc's rebellion, and by way of impressing King Edward II. with the vital importance of these lands to their general welfare, they stated that without them the local populace, burgesses as well as castlemen, would have died of hunger.[3] Their quest was not in vain.

Ultimately the burgesses received a permanent grant of the royal mills and lands in the commote of Ardudwy. The process was a gradual one. Four years after this date (1312) the town property comprised twenty-nine and a quarter burgages, and one hundred and twenty-three acres of arable land at 1d. per acre.[4] Forty-nine acres were added to the arable lands in the next year, which were further increased by four acres in 1316.[5] On the 10th of February 1315 the burgesses acquired a grant of the borough, together with the royal mills and lands of the Crown in the commote of Ardudwy, during the King's pleasure, at the annual farm of £19. 18s. 0½d.[6] At the request of the burgesses, the King on the 8th day of November in the following year converted the grant into one of a fee-farm rent of £22 for ever.[7]

During the next six years an interesting duel was waged

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1231/10; *Arch. Camb.*, III. xiii. p. 186.
[2] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 217.
[3] *Rot. Parl.*, i. p. 276*b*.
[4] *Min. Acc.* 1170/8.
[5] *Ib.*, 1170/10.
[6] *Originalia Rolls* (P.R.O.), 9 Edward II., m. 7.
[7] *Ib.*, 10 Edward II., m. 8.

between the town bailiffs and the local ministers of the Principality as to the exact definition of the royal lands.[1] The contest subsequently went in favour of the bailiffs.[2] The royal lands included detached arable plots in the vills of Trawsvynydd, Maentwrog, Llanenddwyn, Llanaber, Llanddwywe, Llandecwyn, and Ffestiniog. There was also the high mountain of 'Nancoyl,' and a pasture called 'Glasenys,'[3] the home later of Ellis Wynn, the celebrated author of the *Bardd Cwsgc*. The story of the acquisition of the Harlech lands ends with the fee-farm grant of 1316. The town bailiffs added no further tenurial responsibility to their charge.

(*g*) *Bala*

The town of Bala was founded by Roger de Mortimer, the Justiciar of North Wales, about 1310. Fifty-three burgages were measured out early in this year, thirty-four on the royal demesne of Penllyn, and nineteen on freehold lands there. Only forty-four of these plots were built upon in the following year, nine remaining vacant. The markets and fairs previously held at Llanvawr, and producing the annual profit of £10, were removed hither in the same year.[4] This new vill of Bala formed the nucleus of the town that was created a free borough in 1324.

All the burgages were arrented at this date, and the issues of the local market show the slight increase of 2s.[5] Early in the following reign (1332) the burgesses were privileged to hold their borough at the yearly fee-farm rent of £10. 12s.[6] It is evident from the small total of this rent that no large territory pertained to the fee-farm borough, the burgesses depending mostly on the markets and fairs held there. However, it appears from the evidence of later accounts (1377-93)[7] that the burgesses rented the remaining demesne lands of Penllyn at the yearly sum of £3. 0s. 10d. Some of their number occasionally farmed the royal mills of Bala and Pennaran. The demesne lands are not specified, but £13. 12s. 10d. is regarded as the normal issue of the borough during the later period. This amount is termed a fee-farm

[1] *Rot. Parl.*, ii. pp. 17*a*, *b*, 18*a*.
[2] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1327-30, pp. 294-5.
[3] *Min. Acc.* 1231/10. The acreage is given in most cases.
[4] *Ib.*, 1231/5.
[5] *Ib.*, 1232/1.
[6] *Ch. Roll*, 3 Edward III., No. 79.
[7] *Min. Acc.* 1203/1, 2.

rent in the account of 1427,[1] but there is no charter warranting this description.

(*h and i*) *Nevin and Pwllheli*

There was no acquisition of lands in connection with the boroughs of Nevin and Pwllheli. They were simply the old maenors enfranchised. The original extent of Carnarvonshire, taken in the time of Edward I., no longer exists. Fortunately the status of the maenors is preserved in the ministers' accounts of a later date. Apart from evidence of a comparatively modern date, these accounts are our sole authority for the territorial history of the towns.

(*h*) *Nevin*

The maenor of Nevin, previous to its enfranchisement, is described as comprising a *dominicum* and a *burgus*. There were two carucates of land in the demesne, with a meadow of four perches, a garden, and some turbary lands. On it lived five (*sic*) villein tenants paying a money rent of 4s. 9d., and rendering divers services and dues to the value of 49s. 4d. The *burgus* contained about fifty tenants paying fixed money rents (varying in respective amounts from 2d. to 10s.) to the sum of about £5; their corn, herring, and money dues are estimated at £2. 13s. 5d. Three mills, named 'Geyr,' 'Nevin,' and 'Wenneys' yielded a yearly profit of nearly £4. The tolls arising from the brewing of beer and mead, with the customs of the market and the local port, are returned at 36s. 8d. The maenor 'aid' due from the inhabitants of the commote of Dynllaen for purpose of repairs, etc., was £2. The total worth of the maenor at the time of the conquest would thus appear to have been about £20. At the date of its grant to Sir Nigel de Lohereyn in 1350 its entire value was estimated at £35. 19s. 4d. (*sic*).[2] The lands and mills in the meantime had been approved at largely extended rents. In 1355, the burgesses took on the borough at the fee-farm rent of £32. There was apparently a new arrangement on the reversion of the borough into the hands

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1204/1. The amount is changed to £13. 6s. 8d. during the years 1454-73 without apparent cause (*ib.*, 1203/1-6). It is similarly changed to £13. 13s. 4d. (1476-92), which appears as £13. 14s. 4d. in the returns from 1493-1536 (except 1524, when it is written £10. 13s. 4d.).

[2] *Ib.*, 1171/7.

of the Crown. The townsmen return no farm whatever during the reign of Henry IV. owing to the political disturbances. A paltry farm of £3 is offered in the reign of Henry V., increasing gradually in the next reign to £15. £10 is the usual farm during the early years of Edward IV.'s rule. In some of the accounts of this reign the rents of assize are stated to be £6. 0s. 9d. Towards the close of the reign, and throughout the reigns of Richard III. and Henry VII., the town was leased to a fermor for a number of years at the fixed farm of £7. Under Henry VIII. it was let out at a farm of £10. 12s.

(*i*) *Pwllheli*

The royal maenor of Pwllheli contained five carucates of land. One of the two carucates in demesne was farmed (for some time after the conquest) by Ririd ap Cad', a Welsh *vaccarius*. Three carucates are described as being in the maenor of the town of Pwllheli, corresponding perhaps to the *burgus* of Nevin. The mills of 'Dyvyniok' and 'Dynenyor' were situate within the limits of the maenor. Twenty burgages, arrented at 12d. each, made up the vill or town. The tolls and customs of the *burgus*, the pleas and perquisites of the court, and the fair tolls of the town realised 24s. 4d. The maenor 'aid' due from the inhabitants of the commote of Gafflogion, as in the case of Dynllaen to Nevin, amounted to £2. The entire maenor yielded an even rent of £14.[1] This corresponds with the fee-farm rent at which the burgesses were permitted to hold their borough in 1355, on payment of a fine of £24. The town of Pwllheli shared the vicissitudes common to all the North Welsh boroughs during the revolt of Glyndwr. The inhabitants of the borough during the later Tudor period had no recollection of the £14 rent. At least they said so. They only knew of the £4 farm that had been in vogue since the time of Edward IV.[2]

The period of the acquisition of municipal lands falls well

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1171/7.

[2] *Nil* is returned *temp.* Henry IV. (*ib.*, 1175/5-9). The town gradually recovered during the reign of Henry V., a farm of 11s. 4d. in 1413, gradually increasing to £8 by the close of the reign. It continued to improve under Henry VI., the farm at one time realising the amount of £10. 3s. 4d. In the fourth year of Edward IV. it falls to £4. 13s. 4d., at which figure, with occasional variants to £4. 6s. 8d. and £4, it was subsequently farmed till the reign of Edward VI. The twenty-one years' lease comes into prominence during the Tudor period.

within the fourteenth century. With the addition of the villeinage lands of Bodenvewe to the lands of Beaumaris in 1366, the territorial endowment of the municipal element in the Principality of North Wales comes to a close. During the years 1284-1366 a total area of land, amounting to considerably more than five thousand acres, was absorbed by the new municipalities.

In appropriating this tract of land, hitherto untouched by direct English influences, the municipal element partly accomplished the object it was intended to fulfil. It directly narrowed the sphere of tribal custom, and indirectly undermined old institutions existing in districts beyond the pale of its immediate influence. It introduced the principle of the new regime that the lands of a district were not to be inseparably attached to the people of one neighbourhood, but that they were to be subject to the mobility of tenant holdings. The old ties of the family group were shattered in many instances. The municipal element, too, swept away a host of the old Welsh maenorial customs, and proved a veritable godsend in the emancipation of the villein and his villeinage lands. The burgesses of Carnarvon knew nothing of the boon works performed in the autumn by the tenants of the old maenor; nor did they provide jars of butter or present hens to their overlords on New Year's Day.[1] They held their lands by a certain service, and paid rents of assize. The customs of harrowing, mowing, carrying hay and corn were no longer attached to the old lands of Llanvaes[2] as parcel of the borough of Beaumaris. The enfranchisement of the rural maenors of Nevin and Pwllheli also involved release from servile, agricultural, and other dues. The men of Nevin freed themselves from the task of supplying fuel, carrying millstones, and other predial services, and the inhabitants of Pwllheli were no longer troubled with measuring their crannocks of corn.[3] This was the general effect of the process of the acquisition of lands on the old Welsh economy.

The fact that the process came to an end in 1366 has an interesting and important significance from the point of view of municipal history. The question as to how much land each borough franchise was to contain was apparently settled. What

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1171/7.
[2] *Tribal System in Wales* (F. Seebohm,), Appendix A (*a*), p. 4.
[3] *Min. Acc.* 1171/7.

the municipal franchises were in 1366, they probably remained until a comparatively recent date. If by franchise we mean that area of land answered for by the town bailiffs in their annual account, the metes and bounds of the North Welsh boroughs remain unchanged to the close of the Tudor period and even later. The burgesses appear to have concerned themselves at an early date with the marking of their borough boundaries.[1] These were usually rehearsed on charter day in each year. The burgesses of the mediæval borough knew more of the compass of their lands than of their exact acreage. One David Williams (aged sixty-eight years in 1590), a burgess of Pwllheli, walked the *meres* of his borough about forty-eight times, 'which he judgeth' encompassed a circle of about four miles.[2] Particulars of the course of the annual perambulation at Newborough have been already referred to.[3] Those of the remaining boroughs, though we have no early descriptions, were doubtless well known.[4]

The perambulation of the borough boundaries was not necessarily an annual function, though originally it may well have been. The custom was apparently dying out by the time of the governing charters, though a clause was sometimes included authorising the burgesses to do as they pleased or thought necessary. According to the Report of the Boundary Commissioners in 1837, it appears that the limits of the borough of Beaumaris, upwards of ten miles in circumference, were walked once in every three years. Minute plans of the Old and New boroughs of Carnarvon, Beaumaris, and Pwllheli are included in the above report. The liberties of Criccieth encompassed a circuit of from two to three miles; stones with a cross originally marked the limits, and were supplemented later by holed stones. The municipal franchise of Nevin was seven miles round, and was generally perambulated every Michaelmas Day, sometimes by the bailiffs alone. The extensive boundaries of Conway, comprising a circumference of eighteen miles, and marked off in some places with stones bearing the words

[1] See above, p. 52.

[2] Exchequer Special Commission, No. 3381. The boundary, exactly co-extensive with the parish of Deneio, was in reality about five miles (*Parl. Papers*, 1838, vol. xxxv. p. 115).

[3] P. 53 above.

[4] Municipal Corporation Boundaries' Report, 1837. (Beaumaris, Carnarvon, Pwllheli.)

'Conway Liberty,' were walked every three years. In later times the town children took part in the ceremony.[1]

It is purely a matter of conjecture whether the burgesses of Harlech walked round their detached strips of land in the commote of Ardudwy. Did all lands assigned to the burgesses of a mediæval borough *ipso facto* form parcel of the franchise? Grants of county land to individual burgesses, of course, remained part of the county. The franchises of Beaumaris and Conway were evidently extended by the acquisition at fee-farm rents of the lands of Bodenvewe and Lleghan respectively. When offering more than double rents for these lands the burgesses kept their eyes not on the land profits solely, but also on the incidental profits likely to accrue from the extension of their jurisdiction, and of the commercial privileges already vested in their body. The latter privileges were apparently of an elastic nature, being granted to the burgesses irrespective of the amount of lands pertaining to the borough. On the other hand, the diswarrening and disafforesting immunities in the original charters are limited to the lands 'already assigned' (*iam assignatae*). With the addition of further lands these privileges were perhaps liable to extension, the Crown having its say in the amount of the fee-farm rent. The tenurial relation of the burgesses to the lands of their franchise are considered below.

2. The Distribution and Description of the Borough Lands

The physical distribution of the borough is well expressed in the bailiff's usual phrase, 'burgages and lands.'[2] The general phrase, 'town and its appurtenances,' represents the same thing. The town included the burgages and other tenements within the walls, the appurtenances comprising the lands of the liberty on the outside. In this way the town walls divided the borough into intra-mural and extra-mural territory.

The North Welsh boroughs were not all walled towns,[3] though

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1838, vol. xxxv.

[2] The first marginal entry in the normal bailiffs' account is this: 'redditus assisæ *burgagiorum* et *terrarum*.'

[3] There were not many walled boroughs in Wales before the time of Edward I. The walls of Tenby, a borough of early foundation, bear a striking resemblance to those of Carnarvon *temp.* Edward I. Cf. *The Cambrian Journal*, iv. p. 246, and E. Law's *History of Little England beyond Wales*, p. 80.

they are sometimes indiscriminately described as such. Only the boroughs of Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris were really walled. It is stipulated to the burgesses of Bala in their original charter of 1324, that they should surround their town with a wall of brick and mortar, but there is no evidence to show that the wall was ever built. Not being a castle borough, royal support was perhaps not so readily acquired, and the scanty income of the burgesses was hardly equal to the task.

The town walls, where we know that they really existed, as in Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris, played an important part in the ordinary life of these boroughs. They afforded much needed protection in time of peace and war. The burgesses of Carnarvon, in accordance with the terms of a special ordinance, erected their barns and granaries for the deposit of hay and corn produced in the out-fields[1] within the walls of their town. The towers and chambers of the castle, as of the town walls, were often arrented by enterprising burgesses as taverns or storage rooms. Moreover, the majority of these were usually occupied by members of the local administrative staff.[2]

The structural interest of the boroughs is confined chiefly to the walled towns. These were no haphazard foundations. They were established with as much regard for regularity of plan as were the parallel Edwardian towns of Aquitaine, Poitou, and Guienne. The commercial developments of the past century, together with the drastic alterations necessitated by what an early tourist has chosen to describe as 'the æsthetic demands of expensive Cockneydom,' have all but obliterated the mediæval traits.

Their place among towns of the *ville anglaise* type of the early fourteenth century is, however, assured. These towns were built on a regular plan, the principal streets wide, open, and straight, crossing each other at right angles, with a large market-place invariably in the centre of the town.[3] Pughe, writing of Carnarvon in 1850, goes on to say: 'The intra-mural portion still displays its ancient Edwardian form—a single main street with broad rectangular intersections.'[4] Describing

[1] *Rentals and Surveys* (P.R.O.), portf. 17/86. [2] See below, pp. 113-14.
[3] *Notes and Queries*, 1852, pp. 150, 206, 257.
[4] D. W. Pughe's *Description of Conway*, p. 36. Cf. P. B. Williams' *Guide to the County of Carnarvon*, 1812, p. 67, and Bingley's *North Wales, etc.*, p. 87.

Beaumaris twelve years later, the same author conjectures that the old walls enclosed an irregular, elongated area intersected at right angles by the two main thoroughfares. Scarce a vestige of the 'swaddling walls' of Beaumaris existed at this date.[1] English towns of this type were Kingston-on-Hull, Wokingham, and Winchelsea. Conway resembled the latter in its triangular form.[2] An English traveller in 1860 described Conway as 'all but a perfect specimen of a mediæval fortified town.'[3] The garrison boroughs of North Wales, however, were never so elaborately designed as their Continental prototypes.[4]

Pennant, the noted antiquary, was so impressed with the regularity of Bala that he suggested a Roman origin.[5] Rectangular streets meeting in a central market-place is a characteristic of several Welsh towns. The little town of Rhayader (co. Radnor), like Bala, founded by a Mortimer, has this feature.[6] And its presence in the borough of Llanidloes, in the adjoining county of Montgomery, is still more marked. Of the structural form of the boroughs of Nevin, Pwllheli, and Newborough we have little evidence. The first two were obviously parish or village towns. Harlech and Criccieth were perhaps never surrounded with stone walls, the castle in each case providing the burgesses with sufficient protection in time of war.

The prevailing characteristic of these mediæval municipalities was their rural appearance. Entering the town gates at the dawn of the fourteenth century, we should be confronted with a spectacle far different from what our modern notion of a town would lead us to expect. There was no close amalgamation of town houses, much less overcrowding of the urban populace. The well-arranged terraces of burgages were interspersed with green strips of land not appropriated by the dwelling-houses. Royal roads or streets leading to the *forum*, or market-place of the borough, intersected the terraces. These were daily traversed by the burgesses attending to their lands beyond the walls, and

[1] Pughe's *Beaumaris*, p. 26.
[2] See above, p. 61, n. 3.
[3] Halliwell's *Family Excursions in North Wales*, 1860, pp. 110-11.
[4] See *Annales Archéologiques* (Paris), vol. xiv. pp. 316-9, including plans of Beaumaris and Carnarvon. Cf. *Arch. Camb.*, III. i. pp. 252-4. A plan of Conway is given in Pennant's *Tours* (ed. Rhys), iii. p. 116, and is reproduced in one of the later numbers of the now extinct magazine *Wales*.
[5] Pennant's *Tours* (ed. Rhys), ii. p. 205.
[6] Cf. Knighton, Presteign, Painscastle, and Radnor in the same county.

by the country folk on their coming to market for purposes of exchange.

The burgage was to a large extent responsible for the rural aspect of the mediæval borough, and formed one of its predominant features. A burgage is defined by Dr. Gross to include a tenement with the land under and around it.[1] This definition applies to the burgage in its developed or statutory form. A burgage, not built upon, did not necessarily cease to be a burgage, but the individual who held a burgage without building thereon, ceased to be a burgess. The *burgagium* primarily signified a defined piece of land employed as a unit for burghal colonisation. It varied somewhat in extent in the boroughs of North Wales.

The burgage of Carnarvon [2] and Criccieth [3] was eighty feet long by sixty feet broad. That of Beaumaris [4] was equally long, but only forty feet broad. The actual size of the burgage in Conway, Bala, and Harlech is not given. In Newborough the individual holdings are termed 'places' (*placeæ*) yielding variable rents. The burgages referred to in the maenor of Pwllheli, though estimated at a shilling apiece, were not perhaps of the colonising type. There were burgages at Pwllheli before the town was created a free borough. And the inhabitants of the old *burgus* of Nevin would perhaps have dubbed themselves burgesses. The term 'burgages' may have been applied to tenements in those Welsh vills that were assuming the importance, and playing the part of commercial centres. We have several instances of burgages in the *Black Book of St. David's*, many apparently representing the development of some old Welsh tenure, assimilated by Norman influence into burgage holdings. No burghal colonisation took place at Nevin and Pwllheli. The principles of burgage tenure were applied to the *status quo* of the existing maenors. The fee-farm grant emancipated the holdings [5] from the payment of relief and other customary services.[6]

In the remaining boroughs the burgage formed the unit of a new territorial arrangement. The surveyors of the time show great exactness in measuring out the respective burgages.

[1] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. p. 71, n. 3. [2] *Min. Acc.* 1170/4.
[3] *Ib.*, 1170/5. [4] *Ib.*, 1170/6. Cf. *Y Cymmrodor*, vol. x.
[5] *Black Book of St. David's* (Willis Bund), Introduction, pp. xiii., xviii., xxi.
[6] The burgesses of Pwllheli never returned reliefs after the fee-farm grant (*Particulars of Crown Grants A.O. Commonwealth*, Roll Y, 4).

Even the inches are taken into consideration, and any subsequent encroachment, however small, was a cause of immediate remedy in the borough or King's court.

It was stipulated by royal ordinance that every arrented burgage should be built upon; in case of default it reverted to the Crown.[1] Residence was one of the essential qualifications of a burgess.

Town dwellings were for the most part built of timber, the extensive forest of Snowdon supplying the material. A request made (1305) by the burgesses of Beaumaris and Newborough [2] for a grant of *housebote* and *heibote* in the forest of Snowdon came to nothing. It appears from the counter testimony of the North Welsh people that the new burgesses were not altogether scrupulous as to their means of acquiring the timber which they required from time to time. They occasionally made free with the family woods, surrounded with the halo of kinship rights, and oftentimes defrauded the royal woodward of his nominal fee. The burgesses had usually to win the assent of the local Justiciar before the privilege of entering the royal woods was extended to them.[3] Stone buildings appear commonly in the castellated boroughs,[4] the unused material prepared for the castle works being sometimes sold cheaply to the burgesses for this purpose.[5]

Though normally the case of one burgess one burgage,[6] great irregularity existed during the early period when the boroughs were in the making. The years 1283-94 were mostly occupied with building and other material preparations, and civic life hardly assumed a settled state. During the next ten years (1294-1304) colonisation seems to have gone on at a steady pace, encouraged no doubt by the royal ordinance exempting all tenements from their annual rents for this period. Rentals of the more important boroughs appear at the close of this decade, and town accounts first appear about 1305. It is from this date that the bailiffs become chargeable for the issues of the town lands, which, as we have already seen, reached their

[1] *Rentals and Surveys* (P.R.O.), No. 792.
[2] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 223 (twice).
[3] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 7679; *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 213.
[4] *Min. Acc.* 1170/8, 10 (Beaumaris).
[5] *Ib.*, 1211/4 (Carnarvon).
[6] At Llanidloes in 1309 there were sixty-six burgesses, '. . . quorum . . . unusquisque tenet unum burgagium' (*Powysland Club Coll.*, viii. p. 226).

maximum area in 1366.[1] The history of the borough territories from 1366-1536 is one of quality rather than quantity.

At the outset there were too many burgages and too few burgesses. Several unallotted burgages through want of tenants remained in the King's hands. Some of these were devoted to the King's use.[2] An unarrented burgage at Carnarvon was employed as a store-yard for the royal workers there.[3] The issues of vacant burgages were accounted for as being 'in decay' (*in decasu*), and those exempted by special mandate or other exceptional circumstances were held to be 'in respite' (*in respectu*).

In the earliest rental of Carnarvon (1298) fifty-six out of sixty-two burgesses rent one burgage each, the remaining six holding half-burgages.[4] The parallel rental for Beaumaris returns about ninety burgesses to one hundred and forty burgages, and there were several burgages and lands not then arrented. Owing to the scarcity of tenants and the ever unequal proportions of individual enterprise, it often occurred that a burgess held more than one burgage and sometimes less. The following extracts from the terrier[5] of the town of Conway in 1305 illustrate this :—

John de Oxon' holds 2½ burgages entire.
William de Notingham holds 1 burgage entire next to the burgage of the said John.
Felicia Godtyme holds 1½ burgages except 5 feet in breadth.
Robert le Mareschal holds 1 burgage entire near the gate.
John de Penecestre holds 1 burgage and 16 feet besides.
Robert Fot holds 1 burgage less 2 feet in length and 2 feet in breadth.
The wife of Roger *le Scoriere* holds ¾ burgage.
Roger *le Porter* holds 1 burgage less 3 feet in breadth.
William de Westgate holds 2 burgages entire.
Henry de Latham holds 1 burgage entire in breadth, but 3 ins. superfluous in length.

It is sufficiently clear from the above that the burgesses actually held more or less than one burgage. In the rental of

[1] P. 58 above.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1170/7-8 (Conway); 1170/6, 11 (Carnarvon); 1211/3, 1170/6 (Criccieth); 1170/7 (Beaumaris).
[3] *Ib.*, 1170/11.
[4] *Rentals and Surveys* (P.R.O.), No. 17/86.
[5] *Ib.*, 17/87.

Beaumaris we find as many as six and even eleven burgages allotted to the same person.

The number of burgages arrented is thus no true index to the number of the town inhabitants. Nevertheless, an increased number of burgages is unmistakable testimony to the growing prosperity of the borough. The burgage tenements arrented in the North Welsh boroughs, gradually increase with the influx of new burgesses during the early part of the fourteenth century. This development is arrested about the middle of the century, the available territory being apparently entirely appropriated. The numbers of the burgages in Newborough, Pwllheli, and Nevin are not known, and those of Harlech and Conway are lost in 1316, when the townsmen begin to hold their towns at fee-farm rents. The burgage development as shown by the bailiff accounts is as follows :—

Date.	Carnarvon.	Conway.	Criccieth.	Beaumaris.	Harlech.	Bala.
1298	59[1]					
1305	62½			132½[2]	24½	
1309	63	121¾	21⅓	141½		
1311	63	121¾	21⅓	141½	27¼	53
1312	63	124	21⅓	141½	29¼	
1316	63		23⅚	148		
1317	63		23⅚	150		
1321	63		23⅚	153¾		
1322	63		23⅚	154		
1323	63		24⅙	154		
1329	63		24⅚	154¼		
1331	61		24⅙	154¼		
1336	61		25	154¼		
1351	61		25⅙	154¼		
1351-1356	61		25⅚	154¼		

This table illustrates the maximum amount of the intra-mural lands of the respective boroughs which were arrented as burgage tenements. They are ordinarily regarded as being in the occupation of the inhabitants of the town (*villæ*). The account usually runs thus : ' The rents of assize of the burgages and lands of the inhabitants of the town.' [3]

The original ordinance or proclamation, framed no doubt with due regard to the sufficient garrisoning of the boroughs,

[1] *Rentals and Surveys*, No. 17/86.
[2] *Ib.*, No. 767 (printed text, *Arch. Camb.*, suppl. vol., 1877, pp. xiv.-xix.).
[3] E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1711/2.

enacts that the holding of all burgages and lands should be confined to residents only. In the early rental of Beaumaris we find the burgages of Adam Staney and Lewis Felton in the hands of the Prince for non-residence. Following this transaction comes the interesting note that all the lands, burgages, etc., of non-residents are to be taken into the hands of the Prince *as forfeited* according to the ordinance of the King and his council.[1] This rule, however, was not rigidly enforced.

Though residence remained one of the essential qualifications of a burgess, there was considerable laxity in enforcing the strict letter of the old ordinance. Non-residence was often allowed on showing sufficient cause. Absence on the King's service was an excuse often presented and readily received. The privilege of attorney was extended to many, particularly to members of the gild merchant. The application of the rule as to residence varied with the political temperament of the time. The local Justiciars or royal Deputies of the period immediately following the conquest stringently enforced the new rules. William of Doncaster, a burgess of Beaumaris, was deprived of his burgages and lands on the score of non-residence by William de Sutton, the local Justiciar, in 1305. He was subsequently reinstated on the intimation that he had sufficient attorneys there.[2] This privilege of attorney was largely exercised—an indulgence which in the course of time materially weakened the defensive strength of the borough. There was, of course, no danger in such a policy, so long as the political state of the country remained normal. Strong English boroughs with fortified burgages were most needed in times of local and national unrest. At such junctures it was important that every borough should be fully manned. When the insurrection of Glyndwr was at its height Gilbert Talbot, the new Justiciar or Lieutenant of the Prince in North Wales, issued a proclamation to the effect that any burgess having any heredity or burgage in the walled towns of North Wales should come to reside upon his heredity and burgage as ordained in ancient time. Several burgages in the town of Carnarvon were seized through non-compliance with this proclamation, but some of the burgesses advanced a plea of sufficient attorney, and were allowed to remain in possession by the 'King's grace.'[3] The

[1] *Arch. Camb.*, suppl. vol., 1877, p. xviii.
[2] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 225.
[3] *Min. Acc.* 1175/8.

King's grace had much to do with the burgages and lands of the North Welsh boroughs during the Middle Ages.

Twelve pence was the stipulated [1] yearly rent of every burgage tenement, payable in two equal portions at Michaelmas and Easter.[2] This shilling burgage is characteristic of the majority of the Welsh boroughs.[3] The *placeæ* or individual tenements at Newborough varied considerably in size, and consequently in the amounts of their rents,[4] as was also the case at Nevin and Pwllheli.

A fractional part of a burgage returned a proportional share of the whole sum. Some of the burgages through the King's grace were exempted from the annual rents, and others from accidental and special circumstances yielded nothing. For a long time Mary Maunsel, Edward of Carnarvon's first nurse, held a burgage with seventy-three acres of land in the town and liberties of Carnarvon free of rent.[5] A burgage in the same town provided a free site for the local Chapel of St. Mary,[6] and the chaplain held thirty-three acres of the town lands free of rent for his maintenance, in addition to the tithes of the town mills. Beaumaris suffered considerably from the occasional ravages of the Irish Sea, and the dearth of tenants constituted a common cause of decay in all the boroughs.[7]

The burgage rents comprised the most considerable part of the land profits of the in-borough. Over and above the burgage tenements, the intra-mural territory contained detached strips of land, some of which were arrented to the burgesses as curtilage lands, some appropriated by the royal highways, the residue lying waste in the hands of the Crown. Portions of the waste were subsequently let to the town inhabitants.[8] Curtilage lands appear very commonly in Beaumaris, being pieces of enclosed land, varying in size, held severally by the burgesses.[9] There was an acre of curtilage land at Harlech,[10] and several minor strips at Carnarvon.[11] At Newborough we meet with a number of *gardens* and one orchard.[12] A garden is also mentioned as being opposite the castle of Carnarvon, and it

[1] So ordained by Edward I. See *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 223.

[2] *Min. Acc.* 1170/8. 'lxiij. burgagia ville de Caernarvon quolibet burgagio arrentato per annum ad xijd. solvendum ad duos terminos anni videlicet ad festum Sancti Michaelis vjd. Et ad festum Paschae vjd.'

[3] See above, p. 15. [4] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 85-9. [5] *Min. Acc.* 1170/12.

[6] *Ib.*, 1170/4. Cf. *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 224. [7] Cf. p. 65 above.

[8] See below, p. 85. [9] P. 65 above, n. 5. [10] *Min. Acc.* 1170/8.

[11] *Ib.*, 1174/1. [12] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 89.

was well preserved.[1] The 'gardens' of Newborough are hardly distinguishable from its 'crofts,'[2] which were devoted to agricultural purposes.

Other sources yielding rents within the intra-mural territory were the *placea* and the *schoppa*. In the extent of Newborough *placea* appears where we should expect to find *burgagium*.[3] It had apparently no statutory size like the burgage, and is used to denote either a piece of land[4] or a building of some kind. We have inhabited *placeæ* at Conway on both sides of the town walls.[5] There was a *placea* outside the walls of Carnarvon, employed as a store-room, where merchants apparently displayed their merchandise.[6] *Schoppæ* were usually situated in the *forum*, and represent the permanent places of trade as opposed to the temporary stalls or shambles. A piece of land was sometimes annexed to a shop.[7]

Coming to the extra-mural territory, it may be at once noted that the same rule applies to its distribution as to the burgages. The town lands were to be holden by resident burgesses only. One Thomas Danvers, claiming forty-six acres allotted to him in the borough of Beaumaris, which were seized into the King's hand owing to his personal absence, was promptly informed that lands adjacent to the town of Beaumaris were to be held by personal inhabitants, and by them alone.[8] One John Bouqeor, putting in a subsequent claim to these same lands, received an equally emphatic reply, namely, that it was ordained that none should hold land at Beaumaris unless they were resident there. As in the case of the burgage tenements, the privilege of attorney was often extended to the land holdings.

The original charters incidentally refer to the lands already assigned to the different boroughs. Beyond this they throw little light upon the relation of the burgesses or the community of burgesses to the town lands. The extent and character of this assignment we have to glean from the evidences of the earliest official rentals and the bailiff accounts. The rentals of Beaumaris and Carnarvon make it quite clear that the lands, originally marked off to form the liberty or franchise of the

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1172/1.
[2] There were fourteen crofts in Newborough. The term 'croft' is only used once in the rental of Beaumaris.
[3] See *Arch. Camb.*, I. i. p. 307.
[4] *Min. Acc.* 1173/2.
[5] *Ib.*, 1211/2, 1170/6.
[6] *Rentals and Surveys*, 17/86.
[7] *Min. Acc.* 1170/7.
[8] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 224.

respective boroughs, were severally allotted in varying amounts among the burgesses. Some arrented as many as forty-eight acres, some as little as five, and others none at all. The individual enterprise of the early settlers is well evinced in this connection.

By way of example, take the following items from the rental of Carnarvon :—

Henry de Allerton holds	1	burgage	with	40 a.	of	land.
Walter *le Barber*	,, 1	,,	,,	20 a.	,,	
John de Rescy	,, 1	,,	,,	10 a.	,,	
John de Cardigan	,, ½	,,	,,	5 a.	,,	
Henry *Tyllur*	,, 1	,,				

Or to quote the more elaborate instances of Beaumaris :—

John Darling holds 1 burgage with 28 acres of land (8 of the best, 5 of the next best, and 15 mountain land).

Jordan de Bradford, the like.

Emmeric, *L'Engin[ou]r*, holds 2 burgages, 1 curtilage ($7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ perches) together with 48 acres of land (18 of the best, 10 next best, 20 mountain land).

Robert *L'Engleys* holds 1 burgage, 8 acres of land (2 of the best, 2 next best, 4 mountain land).

Ralph *Sutor* holds 1 burgage.

It is evident that the burgage had no definite quota of lands appurtenant to it in the lands of the liberty, and that the burgesses enjoyed a several interest in the lands respectively arrented to them. Their respective plots were hardly enclosed ; the majority of those at Beaumaris are said to be in the common field (*campus*) of Brennar, and the burgesses of Conway held several interests in the *campus* of Gannow.[1] The relation of the burgesses to the unarrented lands or the extra-mural waste is not clear.

The question of common lands is a moot point. It is evident that there were some lands over and above those severally arrented to the burgesses. These lands remained *in manu domini*, and were subject to periodical increase through the process of escheat, scarcity of tenants, and other causes. They formed part of the royal waste until arrented again by the burgesses or the town community. The following entry appears in the

[1] See *Records of Leicester*, i. p. 11 ; *campus* used for land not enclosed.

terrier of Conway :—'Communitas villæ tenet iij. acras quæ fuerunt William Giffard, debet per annum xiiijd.' The community of Conway here fills the gap caused by the loss of a burgess. Would this strip of three acres be common land? The significance seems to be that the bailiffs of Conway would have to answer for the fourteen-pence rent, rather than account for the same as being in decay through want of tenants. In the cases of special grants, we find that the community held certain lands at fee-farm; for example, the community of Conway held the lands of Lleghan at fee-farm, and the community of Beaumaris likewise held the demesne lands near the castle, and the vill of Bodenvewe. These lands, communally arrented in theory, with other vacant and unarrented plots (royal waste) may well have formed the nucleus of the purely common lands of the borough.

The town lands, in respect of their actual distribution, were thus divided into—(1) lands severally arrented by individual burgesses; (2) lands arrented by the community (*a*) for a year or term of years, (*b*) at fee-farm for ever; (3) vacant or unarrented lands in the hands of the Crown. The tenurial relation of the burgess to the Crown and the community, together with the relation of the community and the Crown to the town burgages and lands, is treated in the following section.

3. Tenure and Administration of the Town Burgages and Lands

All lands assigned to the burgesses were held by burgage tenure. This was the universal tenure by which all boroughs were held.[1] It is not expressly mentioned in the original charters of the North Welsh boroughs.[2] Moreover, its presence is sufficiently indicated in the annual returns of the bailiffs. The acquisition of the privilege of holding a borough at fee-farm presupposed the existence of burgage tenure.[3] Five of our boroughs attained this privilege.

It was a free socage tenure.[4] The North Welsh burgesses, like those of their mother-town, Hereford, did 'no fealty or any other foreign service to the King for their tenements, but only

[1] Merewether and Stephens, *Hist. of the Boroughs, etc.*, i. p. 527.
[2] See Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. p. 6, n. 3.
[3] *Firma Burgi* (Madox), p. 4.
[4] *Hist. of Eng. Law* (Pollock and Maitland), i. p. 275.

paid the rents arising out of the said tenements, for the simple reason that they held by the service of burgage or as burgesses.'[1] The burgesses of affiliated boroughs usually repeated this plea when pressed for military service abroad. The royal ministers of the Principality at one time endeavoured to force some of the Newborough burgesses into the ranks of the Welsh detachments that were sent to support Edward III. in one of his Scottish campaigns. The burgesses, however, promptly informed the King that they were as free from all manner of services as were the other free burgesses of North Wales, and, further, that their service was to maintain the peace of the country when he went to foreign lands.[2] The burgesses were liable for service only in cases where distance did not preclude their returning home the same day.

Besides this personal exemption from military service, other immunities were assured to the burgesses by a clause in their original charters. Borough lands were diswarrened and disafforested[3]; they were not to be molested by assarts, building of houses, or by the hunting of such wild animals or game as were to be found on them.[4] The town tenants by virtue of their tenure, and the town lands by virtue of this exemption, were thus estranged from the ordinary tenants and lands of the county in which they were situate.

The lands thus enfranchised were held free to the burgesses on the payment of the stipulated rents. At first they may be regarded as the King's lands arrented by the burgesses, and administered in great measure by royal officials. The supervision of the territorial and other issues of the borough was originally in the hands of the local Justiciar or the Deputy-Governor of North Wales. This subjection to the annual scrutiny of royal officials was not altogether in keeping with the privacy of a community holding burghal privileges to themselves, their heirs, and their successors. The full advantages of the secrecy and permanence assured them by their original charters

[1] Definition of burgage tenure by the burgesses of Hereford (*Arch. Jour.*, xxvii. p. 47).

[2] *Rot. Parl.*, ii. p. 92*a* (*temp.* 9 Edward III.).

[3] Much capital was made of this clause by the inhabitants of the North Welsh boroughs at the time of the Enclosure Acts by way of establishing their ownership claims in the common lands. The clause apparently never implied this, and was generally so interpreted (vid. *Municip. Corpr. Comm. Rep.*, 1835, *s.v.* Flint, Rhuddlan, etc.).

[4] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 164, 176, 180, 194.

were to a large extent nullified by this public and temporary character of their administration. The disposition of lands, the assessing of the yearly farm of the court issues and perquisites, the arrenting of the local market and fair tolls, were all in the hands of royal officials. The town bailiffs, in fact, have the appearance of being little more than servants of the Crown. This was more or less to be expected during the precarious period of their inception. When the boroughs assumed a more normal and fixed form, we find that their administration comes more and more into the hands of the burgesses, until the will of the community ultimately excludes the will of the Crown.

In the earliest borough accounts of the fourteenth century the bailiffs presented minute details of the issues and profits of their borough. Some even included particulars of the small amercements made in the town courts. The physical borough was made to stand out very prominently, by detailed enumerations of the town lands, their acreage, value, etc., and the burgesses for many years hazarded little in the way of annual farms. However, it subsequently came to this. Some boroughs farmed their lands at yearly rents, others, the pleas and perquisites of the town courts, together with the tolls and customs of the local market or port. The entire borough was sometimes farmed at one round sum for a number of years, and town mills and ferries bordering a town were often farmed in a similar way. The local Justiciar frequently adjusted the money amounts of the respective farms. This was the financial state of things at Beaumaris, Carnarvon, Criccieth, and Newborough down to the end of the Middle Ages. The landed profits of the three boroughs first named were seldom farmed, but the commercial and jurisdictional profits were periodically farmed for a number of years, usually, though not invariably, by the town community. In this respect, these boroughs continued to be subject to the arbitrary treatment of the Crown official, and may be said to have enjoyed the profits of their borough during the King's pleasure.

The burgesses of the remaining boroughs—Conway, Nevin, Pwllheli, Bala, and Harlech—during the same period, succeeded in obtaining grants of their towns at fee-farm rents for ever. Instead of answering for the issues of the borough point to point, the bailiffs returned a perpetual yearly rent, a round sum, which never changed except under very special circumstances. The burgesses of Conway took their vill and lands, together

with two mills and the site of another mill below the castle, at a fee-farm rent of £33. 6s. 8d. in 1316. In the next year the Harlech townsmen farmed their town and its appurtenances at a perpetual rent of £22. Nevin and Pwllheli in 1355 opened their career as free boroughs with respective fee-farms of £32 and £14 sterling. The burgesses of Bala acquired their borough at a rent of £10. 12s. in 1332, but this amount did not include the demesne lands held by the burgesses, and the two mills that were sometimes associated with the town economy. The fee-farm rent was a definite one, and was based upon all that was permanently and clearly defined in the *status quo* of the town at the date of the grant; it was not necessarily a composition for the total profits of the borough, but for some of the profits. The burgesses of Beaumaris held some of the town lands at fee-farm, but not their entire borough. The latter privilege was reserved for the close corporation of the Elizabethan period.

The fee-farm or *firma burgi* was a privilege much coveted by municipalities. Its acquisition, moreover, often involved great sacrifice and cost, and sometimes disappointment. The ordinary rents were liable to a substantial increase, and handsome fines were imposed by way of courtesy to the Crown. The burgesses of Carnarvon made an unsuccessful attempt to obtain the privilege in 1328. They petitioned for a grant of their vill, mills, weirs, and lands of their liberty at a fee-farm rent for ever, offering the annual rent as heretofore, with an increment of ten or sixteen shillings.[1] Why Carnarvon failed where the comparatively unimportant boroughs of Nevin and Pwllheli in the same county succeeded is not easy to understand. The bald request on the part of the burgesses is not, however, valueless. It shows that the fee-farm grant conveyed privileges that were much prized by the inhabitants of the mediæval borough. What these privileges comprised is another matter. The respective accounts of the fee-farm boroughs and of those not so privileged, present some obvious and albeit significant differences.

One thing is evident, the fee-farm segregated the administration of the borough. This is very truly and simply marked in the contrast between the bailiffs' return before the concession and after, or again in the contra-distinction between the

[1] *Rot. Parl.*, ii. p. 16*b*. The petition printed here agrees with *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13,107, except that the amount of the increment is sixteen (*sys-dys*) shillings, not ten (*dys*) shillings as in the MS. petition.

financial statements of the fee-farm and of the ordinary borough. One round sum took the place of the various detailed items. The interests of the Crown, excepting the case of royal pleas and other reserved rights, were sufficiently covered by the fee-farm rent. The minute scrutiny of the royal official was in this way checked and rendered at least unnecessary, if not actually impossible. The burgesses were relieved from the dominion of some of the King's officers, and their position was made less subject to the arbitrary interference of the Crown. The annual rents of their lands, the profits of their courts, etc., were no longer adjusted by the King's men. The *firma burgi* in this respect gave a new impetus to the independence of the borough, though modified perhaps to some extent in North Wales by the garrison type of the boroughs. Despite the fee-farm, the royal will remained predominant here, yet all grounds of jealousy and suspicion that the Crown would ever oppress the communities by raising the farm of their towns were removed. As a general rule, the fee-farm rents were not changed. They sometimes decreased in value through the operation of special circumstances, but they hardly ever went beyond the original amounts.[1]

The fee-farm not only emphasised, but also intensified and harmonised the administrative responsibility of the town community. According to Bishop Stubbs, it invested the community with the further character of a *communio* or corporate society.[2] It was one of the potent affinities that ultimately cemented the burgesses into a single personality. It did away with the several method of accounting adopted by the non-fee-farm boroughs, and thereby emphasised the personal rather than the physical unity of the borough. The community of the fee-farm borough took on the responsibility of answering for the issues of their borough, irrespective of the liability of possible loss which was thrown on their shoulders at the same time. The Crown profited by the transaction in so far as it was protected against minor losses. The royal issues of the ordinary boroughs were subject to frequent decay through want of tenants and other causes; the individual losses were not covered by

[1] For instance, after the revolt of Glyndwr the fee-farm of Pwllheli falls to £4, and remained so until 29th June, 32 Elizabeth, when by an order of the Court of Exchequer it was fixed as originally in 23 Edward III. at £14 (*Exchqr. Decrees and Orders*, Series I. bk. xvii. f. 93).

[2] *Constitutional History* (Library Edition), i. pp. 407-8.

the common liability of the fee-farm community, the fiscal relation of whose members allowed of a levelling or squaring up from the common funds of the town. The liability for the agrarian issues included in the fee-farm rent was a communal one; the mind of the community had some direct or indirect connection with the lands of the franchise. To all intents and purposes the agrarian liability in the ordinary boroughs was a several one. This is illustrated very clearly by the prevalence of the 'decay' and 'respite' sections of their accounts in respect of minor losses to the Crown; these items seldom take cognisance of phenomena included in the fee-farm grant. Arrears in both instances are debited to the acting bailiffs for the year. The phrase *communitas debet*[1] is indiscriminately applied to both. From the point of view of the Crown, the debt of the fee-farm borough was the debt of the community, that of the ordinary borough being the debt of the individual or separate tenants. It would be interesting to know what took place when it ever came to a point of law over the arrears. Would the Crown sue the community in the case of a fee-farm borough, and would the town bailiffs as representatives of the Crown sue the individual debtors in ordinary boroughs? Or was the liability for the yearly issues of the borough incident to the bailiffs' function, the bailiffs of the fee-farm borough supplementing any deficiencies in the landed returns with grants from the common chest, and those of the ordinary boroughs making good use of the 'respite' and 'decay' sections? As far as the evidence of the accounts goes, it was ostensibly so. We are told next to nothing of the *superplus* or casual profit made on the year's working. A late document relating to Conway suggests that it was deposited in the common chest of the borough. With the North Welsh boroughs it was almost always a case of *debent* and *quieti sunt* (or *sic equae*), generally the former.

The burgesses of the Middle Ages must have cared whether they lived in a fee-farm borough or not, else why ask for the privilege? What advantages did they obtain in addition to secrecy of administration and increase of executive power? Had the fee-farm a proprietary significance? Did it in any way

[1] *E.g.* 'communitas villae de Beaumaris debet £113. 17s. 2¼d.' (*Min. Acc.* 1174/1), and 'communitas villae de Conewey debet 28s. 6d.' (*ib.*, 1173/1).

affect the tenurial status of the individual burgess? Did the estrangement of royal administration modify the territorial position of the Crown? Did the assumption of agrarian liability by the community of burgesses assign to it the character of a land-owning community? Was the Crown or the Town, lord of the manor in a fee-farm borough?

Taking first the individual burgess. His relation to his tenement was much the same before and after the fee-farm charter. What tenurial benefits were bestowed, influenced the burgesses collectively as members of the community, and that in relation to their communal rather than to their several landed interests. But of this later. The relation of the burgess to his individual holding in fee-farm and other boroughs may be stated in a few words.

Every burgess had an inheritance in his allotted tenement,[1] which he held *in capite* of the King, as Prince of Wales, by the tenure of burgage, and which he was privileged to demise or sell as he willed. Royal licences sanctioning grants or bequests to ecclesiastical bodies were readily obtained. In this way Peter Russell of Beaumaris, a burgess much abused in his time, founded the 'Chantry of Our Lady Mary' there,[2] and a similar licence was granted to Henry de Ellerton, who first endowed the 'Chapel of St. Mary' at Carnarvon.[3] Alienations in mortmain of borough lands without the King's licence, of course, immediately forfeited to the Crown, as did lands demised or leased by burgesses to Welshmen, when the tentative ordinances forbidding such transactions were enforced. A curtilage of land, worth four

[1] See *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 225, where Margaret, daughter of William de Westgate, a burgess of Conway (who died about 1298), claims her father's inheritance. The inquisition taken at his death (*I.P.M.*, 27 Edward I., No. 66) before a jury of Englishmen shows his lands and tenements to be escheated in the hands of the Crown. They were immediately granted to one Simon, son of Vitalis (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1292-1301, p. 492), but William's daughter is ordered to seek remedy before the local Justice of Assize. We have another instance of a burgess's daughter inheriting the lands of her father, and allowed upon her marriage with a person of a servile status to reside in the borough on the payment of a fine of two shillings (*Min. Acc.* 1175/3).

[2] Peter first resided at Beaumaris in 1318. He was imprisoned for some time in the castle prison on the false evidence of his fellow-burgesses. Upon his release in 1330 he founded the 'Chantry of Our Lady Mary' (*Min. Acc.* 1170/12; *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1327-30, p. 549; and *ib.*, 1333-7, p. 570).

[3] *Min. Acc.* 1170/11. Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1461-7, p. 310. See also *Min. Acc.* 1149/2 for Housom's grants, with the King's licence, of lands to the Friars Minor at Llanvaes.

shillings yearly, bequeathed (*sine licencia regis*) by a rich merchant to the 'Chantry of Our Lady Mary' at Beaumaris, escheated in Michaelmas 1418. In the very same year ten acres of arable land leased by Robert Alford, a burgess of the same town, to a Welshman named Madoc with the Black Eyes, were taken into the hands of the King. The county escheator answered for the subsequent profits in each instance.[1]

Children succeeding to the patrimonies of their parents paid no heriots or other customary fines.[2] On the failure of heirs, felony and acts of outlawry, the tenements escheated to the Crown. There were eight burgages *in decay* at Beaumaris in 1459 for the reason that no heirs of the deceased burgesses claimed a heredity (*proprietas*) in them.[3] The burgesses were thus in much the same position as freeholders, holding their tenements in fee-simple subject to the payment of their quit rents.[4] When they sold their lands, they were conveyed by deed, livery, and seisin. Widows usually claimed dower at common law before the Justice of Assize, some by composition and others by consent. This was the custom at Pwllheli from time immemorial, according to the testimony of the oldest burgess in 1590.[5] The same custom was in vogue at Carnarvon, as the following item in the county escheator's return for 1410 seems to imply. Among other items, Thomas Dankynson answers for 'iij*s.* iiij*d.* de parte de iiij*s.* vj*d.* ultra xiiij*d.* liberatis Ceciliæ Mason viduæ nomine dotis de exitibus dimidietatis unius burgagii cum suis pertinentiis in eadem villa quæ fuit Willelmi Schoklathe qui obiit inde seisitus sine herede. etc., die lune proxima post festum Sancti Michaelis anno regni Henrici x*j*. seisita in manu domini et sic dimissa per annum.'[6]

The dower at common law consists of one-third of such lands and tenements as the husband died seised of in fee-simple or fee-tail.[7] The North Welsh boroughs had apparently no special burghal custom in this respect.

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1152/7.

[2] Cf. *Arch. Journal*, xxvii. p. 471 (Hereford customs), and p. 72 above.

[3] *Min. Acc.* 1153/4.

[4] William Ardescote is said to have died 'seised in his demesne as of a fee, without heirs, of burgages and lands in the liberties of Carnarvon which he held of the lord King *in capite* by burgage tenure' (*Min. Acc.* 1177/2). Hugh Huls, a burgess of Beaumaris, outlawed in 1466, was seised in his demesne as of a fee of his burgages and lands in the liberties of Beaumaris (*ib.*, 1154/6).

[5] *Exchqr. Special Commissions*, No. 3381.

[6] *Min. Acc.* 1175/8.

[7] See Jacob's *Law Dictionary*, *s.v.*

It will have been already observed, that originally all burgesses nominally held their burgages and lands of the Crown. This uniformity of tenure forms an interesting feature in the early economy of the boroughs, and would doubtless have long remained so, had not the individual burgess a several and devisable interest in his holding. One of the fascinating problems in the territorial history of the borough after the original allotment is the rise of the several interests therein, or the growth and development of intermediate proprietary rights. Its tenurial status became continually a more complex one. We have to keep view—(1) of the actions of the individual burgesses (so far as they are revealed to us) granting or demising their several interests; (2) of the Crown seizing every opportunity to enjoy the profits of vacated tenements, and regranting the same to other burgesses, often upon terms different from what previously applied; and (3) of the town community in its duel with the Crown for supremacy over the waste and common lands of the borough.

The consolidation of minor interests in the borough territory, through the occasional demise and exchange of tenements, naturally formed the nucleus of larger private estates. A Carnarvon burgess in 1410 held six burgages and two hundred acres of land; another had five burgages with one hundred and twenty acres of land. Compared with these, the original allotments as they appear in the rental of 1296 were insignificant. The uncertainty of burghal prospects in North Wales, combined with other circumstances, made frequent interchange of property inevitable. Some burgesses sold or demised their lands,[1] and others under the pinch of poverty[2] abandoned their holdings in disgust, which in consequence lay vacant in the hands of the Crown. We find the same forces at work in the borough territory as were causing economic changes in the rural hamlets of the neighbouring commotes.[3] Nearly a score of the *ancient deeds* detailing the interchange of burgages in the mediæval boroughs of Harlech and Bala are still on record. They range in date from the reign of Henry IV. to the reign of Henry VII., and

[1] E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1178/1. John Parie of Carnarvon enfeoffed the town chaplain, John Nugent, with his half-burgage. Nugent died in 1428, his half-burgage escheating to the Crown.

[2] *Ib.*, 1153/4. John Goodhewe, a burgess of Beaumaris, on account of poverty, left lands to the annual value of 25s. 2½d. in the hands of the King.

[3] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1902-3, p. 5.

exhibit the process by which private transactions complicated the old and simple economy of the borough territory.[1]

The accumulation of private interests must ultimately have lessened the importance of residence as one of the essentials of burgess-ship. The condition of actual holding of a burgage and lands within the franchise, comes to be supplemented by the qualification of the nominal ownership of burgages and lands in the town liberty, whether resident or not. The later surveys elicit the presence of intermediary interests between the Crown and the actual occupiers of the real tenements. In a survey of Pwllheli, compiled about 1590, we have twenty-two burgesses, all Welsh, living within the *in-liberty* of the town (*infra burgum*), paying annual rents varying in amount from 2d. to 4s. 6½d.; in the *out-liberty* of the town (*extra burgum*), by which is apparently meant the *country* as opposed to the *town* counterpart of the old maenor, we have forty-one tenements held by free burgesses. Some of these latter tenements are grouped into separate freeholds. The freehold of one William Jones, a non-resident, consisted of three tenements, severally occupied by individual tenants :—

One cottage and garden	occupied by	Hugh ap Ieuan, 20d.
„ „	„	David ap John, 18d.
One parcel of land	„	Thomas ap John Wynn, 16d.

William Jones's interest here represents either a threefold division of the ancient patrimony of his ancestors, or tenements severally acquired at some time or other of individual burgesses. Various interests on a larger and more elaborate scale, appearing in the economy of the North Welsh boroughs at a comparatively modern date, are generally due to some abnormal circumstances during the mediæval period. Frequent grants by the Crown, varying in character and amount, did much to complicate the territorial relations of the burgesses. Some were given portions of lands or wastes to be holden to their heirs and assigns for ever, others had leases for a number of years. This was particularly the case with the unoccupied burgages and lands. The Crown sometimes utilised these in the exchanges of lands with the landed nobility.

The most pronounced of these several interests in borough territories are revealed in the inquisitions of the time of Henry VII.

[1] *Cal. Ancient Deeds* (P.R.O.), vol. iii. (Index, *s.n.* Bala and Harlech).

and his successors. They generally fell into the hands of royal officials or court parasites, who during the Tudor period took advantage to cement their private interests in lands over which the Crown had exercised the practical rights of ownership during the Middle Ages. The same official caste profited later by the confiscated lands of the monasteries.

An inquisition taken early in the reign of Henry VII. on the death of one John Moille, an official closely connected with the administration of the towns of Newborough, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris in the time of Edward IV., specifies his fee-simple interest in the town of Beaumaris to consist of several burgages, curtilages, and other lands. The several tenements were in the actual occupation of divers tenants. One John Norres paid him the annual rent of ten shillings for a burgage, ten times the original twelve pence under the old royal and immediate holding.[1]

Two other remarkable inquisitions taken on the death of Sir William Griffith, Kt. (*ob.* 12th July 1532), throw interesting light on the growth of the Penrhyn interest in the boroughs of Carnarvon, Conway, Beaumaris, and Newborough.[2] In the town of Carnarvon he held three messuages producing an annual rent of £2. 3s. 4d., as well as several houses and gardens in the suburbs occupied by Welshmen. In the fee-farm borough of Conway there was only one tenement. His interest in Newborough was not considerable, consisting as it did of two strips of land held respectively by John Lloyd, and David, the son of Edenowain. The Griffith tenements in Beaumaris were very extensive owing to an exchange of lands between Sir William and the Crown.

The early history of the lands forming the nucleus of the Penrhyn interest in Beaumaris may be traced with some accuracy to the latter half of the fourteenth century. Towards the end of the fourteenth century the lands were inherited by one Richard Golden (bailiff of Beaumaris 1386, 1393) through his wife Catherine, sole heiress to the lands of William Cranewell and Thomas Nesse. On Richard's death, some time before 1409, the lands were seized into the hands of the Crown for divers debts owing by him.[3] In the year 1415 one John Kyghley,

[1] *Min. Acc.*, 23-4 Henry VII., No. 1621. See *Add. MS.* (Brit. Mus.), 33,372, f. 6, for his property in Conway.
[2] *Min. Acc.*, 24-5 Henry VIII. (Carnarvon), No. 14; *ib.*, 24-5 Henry VIII. (Anglesea), No. 4.
[3] *Ib.*, 1152/4.

purporting to be the next heir of William Cranewell, was allowed to hold them.[1] Alan Kyghley, son of Richard Kyghley, was in possession in 4 Edward IV.[2] During the years 2-4 Edward IV. Alan paid no rents, with the result that the lands, by letters of Privy Seal dated 9th September, 5 Edward IV., were granted to Eleanor de Stanley. This grant applied apparently to the mills of Llanvaes and Kevencogh only, which were previously held by William Cranewell and his descendants the Kyghleys, but it was evidently extended to the landed property as well. The original patent to Eleanor was made good to Thomas, Lord Stanley, first Earl of Derby, in 1474.[3] A similar grant of the same premises (no lands mentioned) was made to Thomas, second Earl of Derby, of the 25th of February 1489. In 1492 Thomas was three years in arrears with his mill rents, and four years in respect of the lands of William Cranewell and Thomas Nesse.[4] The escheator charged the Earl with illicit entry into the lands, and during the years 1487-1505 included their profits in his annual charge. It was not until the issue of a warrant under the Privy Seal dated 7th March 1507 that the Earl was allowed to continue in possession.[5] During the minority of Edward, third Earl of Derby, who was in the ward of Cardinal Wolsey, the lands were granted by the Crown to Sir William Griffith, Kt., in exchange for the manor of Bispani, co. Lancashire, parcel of the hereditary lands of the said William.[6] Edward Griffith, a minor at his father's death, was allowed to take immediate seisin of his lands by special letters patent.[7]

Up to the date of this exchange the town bailiffs generally included the issues of these lands in their yearly charge, nominally accounting for them in the arrears, and discharging themselves in the respite section. After the grant they continue to respite the usual sum of £8. 10s. 4d. in respect of the old Cranewell and Kyghley lands, until the governing charter of

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1152/6.
[2] *Ib.*, 1154/4.
[3] *Rot. Parl.*, vi. p. 46*b*.
[4] *Min. Acc.*, 6-7 Henry VII., No. 1615.
[5] This Sign Manual is referred to in *Min. Acc.*, 22-3 Henry VII. (Anglesea), No. 1620. I have been unable to find either the original or an enrolment of it. It does not appear in the March bundles of the Chancery Privy Seals for this year, and the *Auditor's Privy Seal Books*, 1*a* (Exchequer of Receipt), and the *Warrants for Issues* (Bdle. 86) of the same department do not contain it. The Memoranda Rolls of the local exchequer at Carnarvon have disappeared with a few exceptions.
[6] *Min. Acc.*, 18-19 Henry VIII. (Carnarvon), No. 62.
[7] *Pat. Roll*, 24 Henry VIII., p. 1, mm. 14-15.

4 Elizabeth excepted these lands from those included in the fee-farm grant to the corporation. The corporate body of Beaumaris in this way became the fiscal administrator of a territorial area, considerably less than the original liberty accounted for by the bailiffs of the mediæval community. Would this have happened if Beaumaris, like Conway, had acquired a fee-farm grant in the early fourteenth century ?

It must be noted that the influence of the Crown in its relation to the creation of several interests is much more marked in the ordinary or non-fee-farm boroughs. Did the fee-farm in any way limit the Crown's right of alienation ? Did the administrative power which it assigned to the town community in any way check arbitrary grants of their lands by the Crown ? If so, did this power over the lands vested in the community, amount to territorial or ownership rights in the common and waste lands of the borough ? Was the community by virtue of the fee-farm grant made lord of the manor ?

It is fairly clear that the Crown did not cease to be lord of the manor, in respect of the fee-farm charter, during the fourteenth and at least the greater part of the fifteenth century, if not later. The town community, moreover, profiting by such increased hold over the town lands as the fee-farm grant implied, and favoured by other external developments in the domains of law and commerce, either gradually usurped or inevitably assumed the functions of lord of the manor during the later centuries. Parallel with the rise and consolidation of the private and several interests in the proprietorship of the town lands, we have the development of a public and communal ownership of the common lands in the person of the town community, as *quasi* lord of the manor.

According to Madox, whatsoever things the Crown granted out in fee-farm, of all and singular those things the Crown was at that time seised in demesne, and the King, when he granted a city or town in fee-farm, was wont to grant the whole city or town—soil, profits, adjuncts, and pertinencies.[1] However complete the grant may have been, in the North Welsh boroughs the local muniments present evidence corroborating the late

[1] *Firma Burgi* (Madox), p. 15.

Professor Maitland's certain belief that King John in his fee-farm grant to Cambridge did not mean to abandon the escheats.[1] To quote a few instances :—

(1) 'The bailiffs of Conway, 1353, in addition to their usual fee-farm rent, account for the profits of half a burgage, taken into the King's hand through the forfeiture of one Philip, son of Hulle, who feloniously slew John of Cardigan. The half-burgage is appraised at 18d., but nothing is returned this year because it remained unoccupied through want of tenants' (*Min Acc.* 1171/9).

(2) 'The bailiffs of the same town in 1396 account for 12d., the rent of one house falling into the King's hand by the death of John of Doncaster' (*Min. Acc.* 1174/8).

(3) 'An entry on the dorse of the account of Pwllheli for the year 1399 consists of a petition to the discreet auditors of the royal accounts in North Wales, from John de Stircheley, asking for a twenty years' grant at a rent of two shillings *per annum* of one built tenement together with an old house and its appurtenances in the town of Pwllheli, formerly belonging to Wirvill vergh Ieuan, a burgess of the vill aforesaid, and which were seised into the hands of our lord the King as his escheats' (*Min. Acc.* 1175/4).

(4) 'Simon Thelwall, escheator of Merioneth, in 1426 returns 16½d., the escheat issues of the fee-farm boroughs of Harlech (1½d.) and Bala (15d.)' (*Min. Acc.* 1203/15).

(5) 'Henry Gartside, the escheator of the same county, four years later, accounts for 10½d., the issue of half a burgage with a certain croft and garden in "Pentemogh" within the liberties of Harlech. These were the forfeited lands of Reginald Botringham, who, armed with an axe, on the morning of Monday next before Martinmas Day, 1429, feloniously murdered his co-burgess, John Holland' (*Min. Acc.* 1204/4).

It is evident from these instances that the community of burgesses was something less than lord of the manor. The several burgesses held of the Crown, not of the community. The late Professor Maitland, in his *Township and Borough*, goes on to say: 'But if the right to escheats is not conveyed, how about the seignory, and if there is no seignory, what of the ownership of the waste ?'[2]

[1] *Township and Borough*, p. 82.
[2] *Op. cit. supra*, pp. 185, 189; also Appendix, pp. 116, 125.

If by waste we mean such lands as were not severally or communally arrented to the burgesses, there is reason to believe that the position of the Crown was little affected. The bulk of the waste was taken up with the royal roads and streets, and the unarrented strips of land that lay vacant *in manu domini*. The point which seems to establish the Crown's interest in these is that all subsequent allotments thereof yield 'new rents.' The fee-farm gave the community no prescriptive rights of use over the waste lands any more than it did over the castle and its towers, or the town walls and its chambers, which to a very late date remained in royal hands. The position of the Crown in this connection was the same in all the boroughs. The 'new rents' are always carefully returned. Additional burgages were sometimes carved out of the intra-mural waste, and burgesses frequently farmed the sites originally reserved for government buildings. We find a parcel of the King's way in Conway producing a new rent of five shillings.[1] The Black Prince enfeoffed Alan de Maxfeld and his heirs with a plot of twenty square yards drawn from the 'royal road' of Beaumaris.[2] David Overton farmed a parcel of land *de solo Regis* near the castle ditch at a fee-farm of two pence.[3] John Stannier, a burgess of Carnarvon, in 1377 arrented a piece of land *de solo domini* near the wall, with the express intention of enlarging his premises.[4]

It would appear from the evidence of the escheats, as well as from the few glimpses that are afforded of the profits of the royal waste, that the Crown in the case of a fee-farm grant still reserved the seigneurial attributes which we associate with the lord of the manor. What limitations were imposed on its tenurial status must be found in the advantages bestowed on the community receiving the same grant, as also in the subsequent importance that later history attached to it. In considering the question of the exact significance of the fee-farm, we have to distinguish between what it actually was, and what it ultimately developed to be.

What the fee-farm community gained tenurially during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was probably in respect of its new administrative power. The individual tenant of a fee-farm borough would evidently regard his territorial position as being more permanent than that of the burgess of an ordinary

[1] *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 7/11.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1149/5.
[3] *Ib.*, 1153/4.
[4] *Ib.*, 1171/7.

borough. One held at a fee-farm rent for ever, the other at a yearly rent. This in itself did not count for much. It was the aggregation of these individual advantages into the hands of the community that gave a predominant position to its members. As a community the fee-farm gave them a something with which they could defy the title of the Crown to their several lands, and perhaps gave them for the first time a real interest in the common lands of the borough. The fee-farm closed the door against arbitrary grants of the town lands, etc., by the Crown. The fee-farm rent is often leased, but not the particular sources that produced it. The fact that the several interests in fee-farm boroughs show less trace of the influence of the Crown, substantiates this limitation in its power of alienation.

The community by virtue of the fee-farm grant and of the agrarian liability which it implied, seems to have acquired some power or restraint over the members in the matter of a general disposition or surrender of their lands. As a community they had a title in the lands, which could not be surrendered without the general consent of all the burgesses. Whether this common title arose from the fiscal responsibility of the community for the fee-farm rent, or from any proprietary interests in the several or common lands of the borough, we cannot say. The proprietary significance of the fee-farm, which was communal rather than individual, is less pronounced during the Middle Ages than it is during the late Tudor and Stuart periods.

There was no obvious reason why the individual burgesses of Carnarvon, Newborough, and other ordinary boroughs should not have given up their lands of their own accord; it would not in any way have affected the liability of the community. It was different in the case of the fee-farm borough. There were several burgesses at Nevin willing to surrender their scanty tenements into the hands of King Charles, who asserted his title to their lands in 1635; but there were others, holding larger interests in the lands, who fell back on the fact that they were a 'corration' *i.e.* a corporation, and that *it* should confer before any reply was delivered. Their sole authority for incorporation was the old fee-farm charter. Was this obligation on the part of the Crown to beg leave to assert its title to the lands of the borough, one of the original limitations occasioned by the fee-farm grant of the mediæval borough? Or was it the result of the prescriptive rights which town communities, especially those not privileged

with a fee-farm, were wont to assume as artificial and corporate bodies during this later period ?

It is more than probable that we have a symptom of this right of the community to confer on questions relating to the borough lands, in the agrarian liability of the old fee-farm grant. There were large, and there were small tenements at Nevin in 1635, and it would appear that the lesser tenants, though quite ready, could not give up their small inheritances without the consent of the corporation. It was apparently Charles's intention to deprive the burgesses of their ancient freeholds. They were threatened with ejection, but successfully withstood the King's threat by emphasising the rights assured them by the fee-farm charter. One of the burgesses, named John Hughes, was heard to exclaim that it was good for the freeholders to have the same charter. Another John, surnamed Wynn, a staunch advocate of the burgesses' title, warned the burgesses assembled in the churchyard of Nevin to hear the King's letter read, that they need not in God's name fear their own title.

The burgesses of the later period evidently read a tenurial significance into their old fee-farm charters, which operated in the direction both of imbuing the community with a general interest in the town lands, and of perpetuating their individual interests in the several holdings. It is a matter of doubt whether the privileges they claimed were precisely contained in the original fee-farm grants, or whether they are to be attributed to the influence of external changes in law and politics. One thing is clear, that the town communities of the Middle Ages were not lords of the manor by virtue of their fee-farm grants, yet at a later period they claim to act as such by virtue of the very same grants.

The problem of the change turns mainly on the question of the ownership of the common and waste lands of the borough. The Crown's position as far as ownership was concerned was little affected by the fee-farm grants of the fourteenth century. The point of ownership was hardly raised during the Middle Ages. Considerable doubt must have existed as to whether common lands should be regarded as belonging to the town community, or as being the waste of the Crown. But the general trend of events gradually worked in favour of the town communities, who, asserting their predominance over the common

lands, ultimately assumed the position and exercised the rights of owners or lords of the manor.

The different stages in the transition cannot be adequately ascertained. The process was slow and irregular. It did not necessarily require the aid of a fee-farm charter. An impetus was given to the movement by the statute of 15 Richard II., which extended the artificial notion of a *body corporate and politic* to borough communities.[1] A decision in the Courts of Law in the eighth year of Edward IV.,[1] establishing the precedent that boroughs privileged with fee-farm charters were thereby incorporated, gave additional prominence to the territorial quality of a full-blown corporate body. The incorporating craze, so prevalent a feature of British municipalities at this time, was seemingly checked in the North Welsh boroughs by their abnormal dependence on the Crown, and the necessity for their remaining so. Autonomous action in relation to lands, cannot very well be associated with the communities of the North Welsh boroughs so long as we are impressed by the notion that they are really units in a sort of *clientèle armée*. It was not until the Act of Union destroyed their quasi-feudal character, that they virtually took distinct and independent action in connection with the borough territory.

Corporate leases of so-called town property before the Act of Union are extremely rare. Towards the middle of the sixteenth century and later, most of the North Welsh borough communities acted as if they had proprietary and demisable interests in their common lands. They granted leases, enacted by-laws, and performed other functions emphasising the territorial quality of their artificial and corporate body. Their right to do this was a questionable one. Learned lawyers of the time were not sure of the legal position. The burgesses themselves, too, entertained grave doubts as to their actual status. Some were illiterate, but at the same time were contented to leave their case to the comprehensiveness of the fee-farm charter, and the rights which the payment of the 'ancient rent' conferred.[2] The fee-farm to them was a valuable asset in the conflict.

Curiously enough the earliest deed that we have come across to which the town community or corporation is party, belongs to a borough not imprivileged with the fee-farm grant. Its

[1] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. p. 93 and note.
[2] *Exchqr. Depositions*, Easter, 20 James I., No. 20.

significance leaves room for doubt. What are we to make of a deed to one Thomas Bowman, dated 20th April 1430, setting forth a conveyance to him by John de Stanley, Constable of Carnarvon and Mayor of the town, and others of the corporation,[1] of a burgage in the town of Carnarvon ? The seal of the community affixed to the deed was well preserved in 1873, and is minutely though hardly accurately described by Breeze in his *Ancient Kalendars of Gwynedd*.[2] In view of the importance and interest of the whole question as to when and how the town community came to grant the borough lands, one hardly knows what significance to attribute to this case. Can we regard this deed as being the private counterpart of the royal patent that we should expect to have met with at an earlier date under the seal of the Principality ? Was the so-called corporation acting merely as the administrative representative of the Crown and holder in trust of the Crown lands, or had it a proprietary right in the burgage ?

The origin of the corporation lease, or the arrenting of lands *by* and not *to* the town communities, must form a stage in the development of their administrative function. The point is, would this predicate the existence of proprietary rights in the lands which they leased ? The burgesses of a later date were of the opinion that it did. It is perhaps possible that the officials of Carnarvon in 1430 were merely acting as administrators of the Crown's landed interests there, and that the deed presupposes no corporate property whatever. It is very likely that the community would sooner or later assume the administrative functions of the royal Justiciar in this respect. Or does the corporate lease mark the period when the community from being administrator of the town lands, comes to regard itself as the owner thereof ?

The question of the growth of the proprietary rights of the community in the common lands of the borough is not easily solved. In North Wales it is almost a case of making bricks without straw.[3] The estrangement of royal administration, in the case even of fee-farm boroughs, did not do away with the royal ownership. On the other hand, the fee-farm gave the

[1] A facsimile of the deed, forming the frontispiece of Breeze's work, is missing from the British Museum and other copies. A copy of the deed is given in the Appendix below.

[2] E. Breeze, *Kalendars of Gwynedd*, 1873, p. 126.

[3] See preceding page for scarcity of sources.

community a kind of administration over the town lands. Was this the nucleus of its subsequent proprietary claims to the common lands of the borough? Did the agrarian liability imposed on the community by the fee-farm, invest its members with rights of common in the common lands of the borough? Later evidence does not contradict this. Common rights were vested in the community, in members holding enclosed lands, and in those that did not.[1] They seem to appertain to the personal community and not to the landed section only. The distinctive feature of the mediæval borough communities, as contrasted with those of the sixteenth and subsequent centuries, is their lack of *personality* or the absence of the exercise of their territorial rights as a *persona ficta*.

It was the expansion of corporate notions during the late Plantagenet and Tudor periods that emphasised this new aspect of burghal activity. Towns, whether possessing a fee-farm or not, classed themselves as corporations, and acted accordingly. The disappearance of feudalism as a system of land tenure in its wider aspects, resulting in the decentralisation and the closer definition of ownership, aroused the borough communities to the possibilities of their tenurial being. The rise of a private landlordism, always eager to expand at the expense of any common or other lands held under a precarious and doubtful tenure in their immediate neighbourhood, threatened their status as a community. Their best rejoinder was to emphasise their own individuality as *private landlords* of their common lands. Extensive leases of common lands were frequently granted in the boroughs of Conway[2] and Beaumaris, where commercial activity lessened the maximum utility of the lands to the community. The success of these boroughs as commercial centres, no doubt stimulated the exercise of their technical powers in this direction. The condition of these boroughs at the beginning of the nineteenth century, consequent to this process, illustrates the varying fortunes of town commons under the respective administration of the popular and the close corporation. The Beaumaris commons by 1835 had dwindled to an insignificant area of less than twenty acres.[3]

In the agricultural boroughs of Newborough, Nevin, and

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1870, vol. lv., and 1835, vol. xxxv.
[2] R. Williams, *History of Aberconway*, 1835, p. 98.
[3] *Parl. Papers*, 1835, vol. xvi. p. 2589.

Pwllheli, which, during the period subsequent to the Act of Union, may not be unfitly described as small and poor villages with a glorious past, the common lands continued to be a necessary asset for the everyday sustenance of almost all the inhabitants. The mediæval conditions of undefined ownership, together with the practice of communal husbandry, survived in these boroughs to a comparatively late period. Their commons were undisturbed until the craze for 'Norfolk farming,' extending itself to Wales in the early nineteenth century, caused drastic changes in the system of Welsh agriculture. The Enclosure Acts of this period paid scant respect to the landed rights of the Welsh municipalities, which the burgesses claimed as their heritage from the Middle Ages.

The common lands of each borough have a separate story. The burgesses of Conway, favoured with their fee-farm grants, kept a firm grip on their land. When the commissioners visited the town in 1835, the burgesses were actually possessed with the idea that they were really the owners of more lands than were then in their possession. They should rather, we may think, have considered themselves fortunate to have held so much. Their fate might well have been similar to that of their fellow-burgesses at Nevin, Pwllheli, and Newborough. Nevin and Pwllheli, though they successfully established their claim to their freeholds in the time of Charles I.,[1] and despite the fact that they granted leases of their common lands (on a small scale, it is true) during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were yet deprived of their common rights by the Enclosure Acts of the early nineteenth century. The feeling of disappointment at the loss of the common was *fresh* and *strong* at Nevin during the visit of the royal commissioners in 1835, and was likely to continue, so long as entries in the town books authorised men like one Richard Edwards, to enclose a small parcel (seven acres) of the common (about three hundred acres) belonging to the town, at a yearly rent of five shillings for ever. This was unmistakable testimony to the exercise of ownership rights by the corporation. The burgesses were not far wrong in their opinion that the whole common enclosed by the Act of 1812 was their own freehold. At Pwllheli matters were much worse. The operation of the Enclosure Act of 1811, the burgesses stated, was nothing short of complete robbery. Their old books contained leases of the very lands that were confiscated. Moreover,

[1] *Exchqr. Depositions*, 11 Charles I., Easter, No. 31.

the royal commissioner appointed under the Act was of the opinion that he sold nothing but *waste lands* of the Crown. And there certainly was legitimate ground for this statement so far as the original significance of the fee-farm was concerned, but in view of the long custom of the community to regard itself as a corporation and act accordingly in relation to its common lands, the balance of a just verdict would probably have gone in favour of the burgesses.[1]

The whole question of the enclosure of town and rural commons in Wales is a fascinating problem. We have to some extent anticipated this interest mainly with the view of illustrating some of its mediæval connections. The problem of ownership would seem to start with the fee-farm grant, which presumably vested in the members of the community rights of common pasture, turbary, etc., the Crown remaining lord of the manor and owner of the soil. The rise of the town community to the position of lord of the manor was due either to the development of the administrative power delegated from the Crown to the community through the fee-farm grant and other channels, or to the assumption of ownership rights on the plea that it was an artificial and corporate body. Law and politics, as we have seen, favoured the community. The victory of the community at Conway was more complete and permanent than was the case at Nevin and Pwllheli. The common lands at Carnarvon were inconsiderable, and those at Beaumaris were subjected to the will of a close corporation, that claimed to be lord of the manor in virtue of the fee-farm grant of the borough by the governing charter of the fourth year of Elizabeth.

The administration of the town property has been incidentally dealt with in the preceding remarks on its tenure. Further information is given below in the administrative section dealing with the respective functions of the borough officers. A few notes may be inserted here by way of summarising the scattered remarks already made, as well as of notifying some of the special features that present themselves. The administration of the borough territory during the Middle Ages is concerned mainly with the mode of letting or arrenting the town burgages and lands, the collection of rents, and the formulation of general and particular laws. It may thus be conveniently studied under (1) its executive, (2) fiscal, and (3) legislative aspects.

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1835, vol. xxv., and 1838, vol. xxxv.

(1) *Executive.*—The borough territories formed parcel of the Principality of North Wales. The problem of their administration is thus to some extent connected with the wider subject of the general or state government of North Wales. This in its fiscal and judicial aspects we consider later. It will be sufficient to note here that the lands and other profits of the borough were subject to the supervision of the royal officers of the Principality. In respect of general management and the arrenting of lands, etc., the administration was not purely a borough one. The local Justiciar of North Wales in conjunction with the local Chamberlain, during the Michaelmas audit at the local exchequer of Carnarvon, defined and fixed the variable rents and farms of the boroughs. In the case of fee-farm boroughs this duty was, of course, limited to the reserved issues and property of the Crown. The particulars of these transactions were enrolled on the annual *Rotulus dimissionum.*

A few of these rolls, five or six in number,[1] are still available at the Public Record Office. They throw much light on the annual routine work of the local exchequer at Carnarvon.

They tell us little of the fee-farm boroughs beyond detailing the profits coming from items not incorporated in the perpetual rent, such as castle towers and chambers, ferries, and detached strips of the royal waste. Of these, as of the varying issues of the ordinary borough, they generally give the name of the fermor, the nature and amount of the farm, and the period over which it extended. The names of the town bailiffs elected for the coming year were also included. These 'Demise Rolls,' together with the extents and terriers of the town lands, were carefully kept at the exchequer of Carnarvon for the convenience of the auditors and the local administrative staff. The town bailiffs made frequent reference to the 'Demise Rolls' as their precedent. They sometimes gave a brief recital of the particular of a rent *ut per rotulum dimissionum*,[2] and in the case of the decay of some borough profit, they said on oath that no one wished to arrent it *ut in rotulo dimissionum*.[3]

[1] The earliest extant is that of 27 Edward III., which includes a profferer's account as well (*Min. Acc.* 1305/16). Those preserved among the Miscellanea of the Exchequer (7/11, 7/17, 8/28, 8/29) belong to the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV. Some of them (1305/16, 8/38) contain several other enrolments beside the demise of bailiwicks, and partake of the nature of general *memoranda* rolls of the local exchequer at Carnarvon.

[2] E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1153/4.

[3] *Ib.*, 1180/3.

The grants of certain premises, occasionally made to individuals by express order of the Crown, were sometimes executed by letters patent under the Great Seal of England, and sometimes under the seal of the North Welsh Principality. In the latter case they were enrolled on the local memoranda rolls of the Carnarvon exchequer. It was through the medium of the local chancery and exchequer at Carnarvon, that the royal will in relation to the burgage and lands of the borough was communicated to the town bailiffs. The Justiciar ordered them to take vacated tenements into the King's hand, and he also instructed them to respite and pardon certain rents.

The Justiciar acted throughout as the deputy of the Crown. The sheriff of the county had no tenurial jurisdiction over the borough. The landed issues of the borough never formed parcel of the sheriff's farm in the three counties of North Wales.

The chief executive officers of the town lands were, of course, the bailiffs. They collected the rents, and carried out the respective orders of the local Justiciar, and of the local courts relating to the same. The bailiffs, in the performance of the territorial as of the other aspects of their duties, found their chief *posse* in the jurisdictions of the town courts. Questions of encroachment or purpresture, disobedience to the bailiffs' command, non-payment of rent at the statutory times, etc., were remedied there, and vacant burgages were presented at the Court Leet. A sub-bailiff or steward sometimes assisted the bailiffs in the performance of their duties.

The escheat issues of the borough were for some time answered for by town coroners,[1] but towards the end of the reign of Richard II. the county escheator began to take account of them. We have only one instance of a sheriff answering for the issue of escheat lands within a North Welsh borough.

(2) *Fiscal.*—The bailiffs had little or nothing to do with the assessment of the rents : the burgages were fixed at twelve pence each, and the towers, castle chambers, lands, etc., were assigned by the Justiciar at fixed rents. These the bailiffs included in their charge as the *rents of assize.* Upon the arrenting of any new lands, mills, or weirs they made a return of the profits as *new rents.* These latter represented the additional revenues emanating from the town liberty apart from the *rents of assize.* As far

[1] See ch. v. below, *s.n.* Coroner.

as the town lands are concerned, the accounts present a striking similarity during successive centuries. The account of each year is made to coincide as far as possible with that of the previous year. The annual changes in the territorial condition of the borough were marked by a minute process of subtraction in the terms of pounds, shillings, and pence, arranged on the discharge side of the account under the headings 'decay' (*in decasu*) and 'respite' (*in respectu*).

The *rents of assize*, once the boroughs assumed a fixed form, differ little in amount. The items of the successive accounts become exceedingly monotonous, redeemed only in the case of occasional rearrangements in the amounts of the market and fair profits, the fluctuating issues of the town mills, and the slow and spasmodic development of the local fisheries. As far as the houses and lands of the mediæval borough are concerned, the interest of the late fourteenth and fifteenth century accounts is confined to their 'respite' and 'decay' sections. The evidence presented by both of these sections is of more than ordinary interest. In them are reflected the silent forces that temporarily, and sometimes permanently affected the borough. Note is also made of burgages and lands becoming vacant through want of tenants, defect of heirs, poverty, and non-compliance with the statutory regulations. The disastrous economic effects of the political revolts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are carefully marked in the same sections. When burgages and lands through some untoward circumstances failed to yield their normal rents, the bailiffs returned what they had for them *per appruamentum*, the deficit being accounted for as being *in decasu*. This was often the case with tenements on the expiration of a lease or grant for term of years, when the lands reverted to the Crown for a short period previous to a new grant. The checking of the periodical changes in the royal issues of the borough territory formed an important feature in the finance of the mediæval borough. *Respite* and *decay* sections are seldom found in the accounts of the fee-farm boroughs. It was usual to bring forward the respite and decay rents of each year as the arrears of the next. This gave a fictional character to the account, *e.g.* the arrears of Beaumaris in the year 1534 appear in the account as £353. 16s. 2¼d., but the actual debt was nothing, the amount representing the yearly respited rent of £8. 4s. 6¾d. for the preceding forty-three years. The same sum

is added to the arrears in 1535, making the total £362. 0s. 9d. This method of accounting, no doubt, served to keep the old territorial unity of the borough intact.

(3) *Legislative.*—The laws and ordinances regulating the administration of the borough lands were instituted at the instance (*a*) of the Crown and (*b*) of the borough communities.

Those enacted by the Crown were mostly of a political character, and fall naturally into two divisions. In the first division we have two general ordinances safeguarding English interests in the castellated boroughs. The first forbade to Welshmen the right of residence within a walled borough and of holding a burgage therein; and the second in like manner withheld from Welshmen the privilege of holding any lands within the liberties of the English boroughs in North Wales. Both ordinances [1] were the work of Edward I., and in conjunction with other ordinances of parallel origin and purport were given statutory form in the repressive statutes of Henry IV. They were nominally ratified for the last time in 1446 by Henry VI., in response to a complaint of the English inhabitants in North Wales. The ordinances were never intended to be put into literal operation. The degree to which they were enforced varied with the fluctuating temperament of current politics. They were not finally repealed until the reign of James I., but, as a matter of fact, they had become legally ineffectual with the Act of Union, and in actual practice at a much earlier date. It would be difficult to name any English borough in North Wales that did not harbour a Welshman from the time of the conquest onwards. The story of this transition is related elsewhere.

In the second division we have royal ordinances stipulating the conditions upon which burgages and lands were to be held in the North Welsh boroughs. These are five in number, and are to the following effect in their Latin texts:—

(1) '[Ordinatum fuit per dominum Regem et ejus consilium quod] omnes terras burgagia et tenementa non residencium capiuntur in manu principis tanquam forisfactura' (*Arch. Camb. Orig. Docts.*, suppl. vol., 1877, p. xviii.).

(2) 'Ordinatum fuit quod terrae adjacentes prædictæ villæ liberentur commorantibus et personaliter habitantibus et eisdem arententur et non aliis; or, Ordinatum fuit per Regem

[1] *Record of Carnarvon*, p. 132.

(Edward I.) quod nullus teneret apud Bellum Mariscum nisi tantum illi qui sunt residentes ibidem' (*Rec. of Carn.*, p. 224).

(3) '[Proclamatum fuit] per Gilbertum dominum Talbot locumtenentem domini Principis in North Wallia quod quilibet burgencium habens aliquam hereditatem vel burgagia in aliqua villa murata infra partes Northwalliæ ad residendum veniret super suam hereditatem et burgagia domini principi prout in antiquo tempore ordinatum fuit' (*Min. Acc.* 1175/7). [Quoted here to show that the principle recognised in the particular case of Beaumaris in (1) and (2) was of general application.]

(4) '[Ordinatum fuit quod omnes terræ assignatæ burgensibus de Caernarvon arrententur ita] pro quolibet burgagio xijd. per annum, et pro qualibet acra terræ ibidem ijd.' (*Rec. of Carn.*, p. 223).

(5) 'Proclamatum fuit] in prima fundacione villæ Belli Mariscum quod omnes burgenses eiusdem villæ tenerent burgagia et terras eis ibidem assignata libere sine aliquo redditu per x annos proximos sequentes' (*Rec. of Carn.*, ib.).

The main object of these ordinances, as may be inferred, was (1) to encourage the early colonisation of the boroughs by English settlers; (2) to assure the munition and defence of the borough.

There is but very little evidence of private legislation by the North Welsh borough communities during the Middle Ages. The court rolls contain notices of trespasses committed against what are termed the 'ordinances of the town.' One of these items refers to the building of a house (? *seunta*) in the town of Carnarvon *sine licencia* by a certain Richard of Pwllheli on the land of William de Bethleye.[1] The Leet evidently supervised and regulated the structural growth of the town. There are, however, no distinctive by-laws for the North Welsh boroughs until the Tudor period and later. The corporation books of this later date contain several local enactments dealing with the proper custody of pigs, and the remedy of other Welsh nuisances.

Some note must also be made of the 'customs' adopted by affiliative right from the mother-town. By a clause in their original charters, each of the free boroughs of North Wales had a nominal claim to direct their internal affairs in accordance with the privileges of Hereford. The more important items in the territorial complement of these laws related to the free

[1] *Court Rolls*, 215/46.

assignment by a burgess of his tenement, and its exemption from heriots and other customary services. The same 'laws,' too, provided for the secure administration of bequests made in the last wills and testaments of deceased burgesses, and the process of installing a new burgess in his tenement, together with details concerning cases of illegal and forcible ejection, is carefully enumerated.[1]

Instances of the actual exercise of these privileges and customs in North Wales are, moreover, very rare in the existing muniments. But as the latter are mostly of a royal rather than of a private character, it must not be presumed too readily that the theoretical connection between Hereford and the North Welsh boroughs had no practical effect upon their economic working.

[1] *Archæological Journal*, vol. xxvii. pp. 471-5.

V

THE ADMINISTRATION OR GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTH WELSH BOROUGHS, 1284-1536

THE administration of the North Welsh borough as a territorial unit has been already discussed (ch. iv.). In this chapter we treat of its administration as (1) a military and (2) jurisdictional unit; as (3) an organ of finance, together with (4) an enumeration of the borough officers, and (5) the municipal paraphernalia used. For the sake of convenience we have subdivided the subject thus :—

I. THE DEFENCE OF THE BOROUGH.
- (i) Apparatus for Defence.
- (ii) Agents of Defence—(1) Royal, (2) Civic.

II. THE PEACE OF THE BOROUGH.
- (i) Jurisdictional Privileges of the Borough.
- (ii) The Borough Courts.
- (iii) The Boroughs and the Crown Pleas.

III. THE FINANCE OF THE BOROUGH.
- (i) Sources of Revenue.
- (ii) Items of Expenditure.
- (iii) Collection and Disbursement.

IV. THE OFFICERS OF THE BOROUGH.
- (i) The Constable of the Castle.
  1. Governor of the Castle.
  2. Governor of the Fortified Borough.
  3. Keeper of the Castle Gaol.
  4. Ex-officio Mayor.
  5. Extraordinary Duties.
- (ii) The Mayor of the Borough.
- (iii) Alderman.
- (iv) Bailiffs.

(v) Sub-Bailiffs.
(vi) Affeerers.
(vii) Coroners and Escheators.
(viii) Mace-Bearers.
(ix) Keepers of the Town Prison.
(x) Town Crier.
(xi) Steward of the Borough Mills.

V. Municipal Paraphernalia.

I. The Defence of the Borough

Burghal defence was an exacting problem in the politics of Mediæval Wales. This was especially the case in the North Welsh boroughs. With the exception of the little inland borough of Bala, they were all exposed by the fact of their situation to the perils of a seaport town.[1] The prospects of booty made them tempting objects for the daring inroads of the Western rovers. The openness of the Welsh sea-board, with its opportunities for stealthy approach, gave to the Welsh ports the sinister repute of being admirable vantage-grounds for hostile descent. Danger in this direction on the part of enemies from Scotland and France during the Middle Ages, with the additional fear of concerted action by the wavering Welsh, notorious as the latter were for their lightness of head[2] or tendency to rebel, often embarrassed the English authorities.

Rumours of alleged invasions of the realm by way of Wales, suspicions (often unfounded) of pending revolt amongst the native inhabitants, continually reached English ears, and served to emphasise the national importance of an adequate policy of Welsh defence. Even as late as 1436 the author of the *Libell of English Policy* advised his countrymen to 'beware of Wales.'[3] He was not unmindful of the recent rebellion of Glyndwr, which so seriously jeopardised the English cause in Wales. Sir Richard Bulkeley, writing to Cromwell more than a century later (9th April 1539) on the question of the defence of Wales, refers especially to the dangers arising from the island of Anglesea. 'The Isle of Anglesea,' he says, 'lies open upon all countries,

[1] Green, *Town Life, etc.*, i. pp. 128-9.
[2] Cf. *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 167, n. 10. See also *Letters and Papers Henry VIII.*, vol. viii. p. 509. A light Welshman=a disloyal Welshman.
[3] *Trans. R.H.S.*, ut cit., p. 168.

it is but a day's sail from Scotland. Breton lies open on it, and the men of Conquet know it as well as we do; so also the Spaniards know every haven and creek; and Ireland and other countries lie open upon it.'[1]

Borough defence in Wales, before the Act of Union with England, demanded something more than the ordinary precautions of the civic community, particularly in the castellated towns. Carnarvon, Conway, Beaumaris, Harlech, and Criccieth were in much the same position as some of the more important frontier towns of the period, such as Hereford, Shrewsbury, and Bristol.[2] They were concerned not only with the maintenance of their civic rights against troublesome neighbours, but also with their additional obligations and duties as units in a systematised policy of English defence. The North Welsh boroughs were not isolated and self-dependent, as was the case with the generality of boroughs. The problem of their defence was almost an extra-municipal one, owing more to the political precautions of the English Government than to the initiative and enterprise of the town communities. This is very true of the castellated boroughs, and under exceptional circumstances of the non-garrison boroughs as well. A consideration of (1) the physical and (2) personal apparatus of English defence in North Wales will strengthen this conclusion.

(i) *Apparatus for Defence*

The physical apparatus comprised the castles and their towers, the town walls and their gates, together with the town quays and bridges. The castle, though hardly germane to the subject of municipal defence in Wales during the Middle Ages (yet inseparably connected with it) may be treated in a concise way.

(*a*) *The Castles of North Wales.*—Of these it is enough to say that the five castles of Carnarvon, Conway, Criccieth, Beaumaris, and Harlech were elaborately constructed at the public expense, and were adequately garrisoned throughout the fourteenth century. Criccieth castle was irrecoverably damaged during Glyndwr's revolt, but the remaining four continued to be irregularly utilised for military purposes down to the beginning of the Tudor period. After this date the castles lost their

[1] *Letters and Papers Henry VIII.*, xiv. p. 732.
[2] Green, *op. cit. et ref.* Cf. *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 133.

primary military importance, and with the exception of the edifices maintained within their precincts for administrative purposes, entered upon a period of rapid decay. A warrant[1] dated 1st July 1538 refers to the four castles of North Wales as being 'moche ruinous and ferre in decaye for lakke of tymely reparacions.'

(*b*) *Town Walls, Quays, etc.*—Only the typical garrison boroughs of Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris were really walled. The early colonists, alive to the perils of their situation in a disaffected province, or as they usually put it, 'exposed as they were to the insolence and assaults of their enemies around,'[2] were loud in their clamour for the protection of efficient town walls. The walls, however, for a long time belonged to the Crown rather than to the borough. The cost of building and repair during the period of settlement was generally included among the ordinary expenses connected with the garrison works in North Wales. From the point of view of the Crown, the town walls were evidently regarded as parcel of the apparatus of English defence, yet from the obvious advantages which they conferred on the town community, it was natural that the Crown should exhibit a tendency to throw as much as possible of the liability of maintenance on to the shoulders of the burgesses.

The burgesses of Beaumaris in a long petition to Edward II. set forth the political and commercial advantages that would inevitably accrue to them if their town were enclosed with a wall. In reply, they were pertinently asked what aid they themselves were prepared to contribute towards the erection.[3] The details of their answer are missing. The town was apparently badly protected until after the rising of Glyndwr, when Gilbert, Lord Talbot, the reorganiser of the decayed boroughs of Anglesea after the devastations of the rebels, appropriated thirty of the town burgages for the purpose of building a new stone wall round the town.[4] Towards the repair of the same walls, Henry VI. in 1451 allowed a sum of £20 yearly out of the royal issues of the borough for four years.[5] Small amounts payable out of the general issues of the Principality were expended on their reparation during the reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII.[6]

[1] Enrolled on divers ministers' accounts for North Wales of this date, e.g. *Min. Acc.*, 29-30 Henry VIII. (co. Merioneth), No. 1.
[2] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13,991.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Min. Acc.* 1152-5 (*temp.* 1409-14). Cf. *ib.*, 1216-2.
[5] *Ib.*, 1155-6.
[6] E.g. *ib.* (North Wales), 14 Henry VII., No. 1595; 27 Henry VIII., No. 163.

The last considerable sum spent by the Crown on the walls of Beaumaris was in the year 1540.[1] A roll of fourteen membranes, now wanting, detailed the particulars of the work done. Out of a total amount of £41. 6s. 9d., one Robert Burghill, who superintended the walling operations for a whole year, took £10.

The burgesses of Conway, a town bordering upon a treacherous part of sea, showed an early interest in their town walls. They petitioned Edward of Carnarvon for a grant of murage, and at the same time threw out the suggestion that an annual sum of £20 issuing from the borough profits should be devoted to the maintenance of the walls for a number of years.[2] We know that they received the promise of a grant of murage for seven years.[3] This instance is notable as being apparently the only murage grant ever made to a North Welsh borough. All the boroughs, by virtue of their original charters, included *murage* among their general commercial privileges. This exempted the burgesses from the payment of murage tolls when entering other boroughs.[4] The toll was chargeable on all vendible goods entering the town. Special grants of murage were frequently made, enabling the burgesses to collect murage at their town gates for the reparation of their walls. Instances of this appear commonly in the frontier and isolated towns of the Marches, such as Montgomery, Radnor, Kington, Clun, Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Ludlow, and Abergavenny.[5] The fewness of such grants to the boroughs of North Wales is partly explained by the fact that the district contained only three walled towns, and that the brunt of the expenses of the town fortifications fell upon the Crown, the borough finances in consequence being little affected.

So long as the custody of the castle and that of the borough were closely associated, as most certainly was the case during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the whole responsibility of maintenance rested with the Crown. The burgesses made the most of their political status as a useful means of soliciting aid from the Crown. The walls of Carnarvon towards the castle on the west side were erected by royal command in 1326, and the western gate of the town, unfortunately burnt in the reign

[1] *Min. Acc.* (Anglesea), 30-1 Henry VIII., No. 239.
[2] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 9365. [3] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 223.
[4] *Ib.* (P.Q.W.), pp. 161, 165, 176, 181, 187, 195, 198. Cf. Daniel-Tyssen's *Carmarthen Charters*, pp. 44, 59.
[5] *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (*temp.* Edward I. to Edward III.), *s.n.*

of Edward I., was similarly repaired. The alleged purpose of these new works was *the better keeping of the castle and town.*[1] Seven years previously the burgesses of Carnarvon had petitioned the Crown to repair the bridge of the 'great gate' leading into their town.[2] The request was fulfilled two years later, after the King was given to understand that he had been wont to repair the bridge.[3] Even as late as the Tudor period [4] English sovereigns spent money on this same bridge. The liability of defence at Carnarvon, as in the other castle boroughs, is very typical. It was the King's planks, hewed at public expense in the royal forest of Snowdon, that bridged the Seiont there, and the King's gates leading through the town walls were continually guarded by experienced watchmen at the royal expense.

This is again very evident in the circumstance of the erection and maintenance of the town quays, where, naturally, we should expect the burgesses to participate in the liability incurred. The burgesses of Conway sought a royal aid of £100 to repair their demolished quay,[5] and in May 1315 the local chamberlain was ordered to expend that amount for this purpose.[6] In August of the next year an additional sum of one hundred marks was voted to carry on the same work, with a proviso that the remainder of the work should be accomplished by the burgesses at their own cost.[7]

In the same year (1316) a yearly sum of £100 was granted towards the completion of the haven works at Carnarvon.[8] Weekly accounts of the operations on the quay from 15th October to 21st November 1316 are still preserved. They give the names of several Welshmen who were employed in the quarry at the end of the town. A portion of the quay was done by contract; Henry de Ellerton, the master mason, undertook to construct twelve perches at £8 per perch of twenty-five feet.[9] Six years later, in 1322, the quay was reported to be in a bad state of repair, to the great peril of the King's castle there. The King, it is expressly stated, was bound to repair and maintain it.[10] Fourteen weekly accounts, ranging in date from June to September, give minute particulars of the progress made during

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1323-7, pp. 445, 451. [2] *Ib.*, 1318-23, p. 165.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 406. [4] *Min. Acc.*, 23 Henry VII., No. 1600.
[5] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13,687.
[6] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1313-18, p. 178. [7] *Ib.*, p. 357. [8] *Ib.*, p. 265.
[9] *Exchqr. K.R. Acct.* 486/29. Cf. *Min. Acc.* 1170/11.
[10] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1318-23, pp. 449, 661.

the summer of 1322. Five Welshmen plied the royal barge that conveyed the bulk of the stone material utilized from the little quarry of Aberpwll, on the border of the Bishop's territory. The master mason, Henry de Ellerton, received 14s. a week, the ordinary masons taking 8d. a day in wages. The weekly stipend of one Robert de Hope, clerk of the works, was 2s. 7½d.[1] The quay of Carnarvon was subsequently repaired by the Crown in a similar manner.[2]

Quays formed essential factors in the apparatus of national defence. The necessity for constantly keeping them in good repair was twofold. They protected the castles from the sea, and facilitated the victualling of the garrison, a matter of paramount importance. The burgesses of Beaumaris once told Edward II. that for want of a quay the town and castle were in great danger.[3] In 1322 the King considerately ordered that the quay between the castle of Beaumaris and the sea be repaired *so that the castle may not be damaged.*[4] The cost of repairing quays remained for a long time to come a common item among the general works' expenses [5] charged to the chamberlain of the local exchequer at Carnarvon. Conway in 1535 [6] and Carnarvon in 1540 [7] afford a few late examples of this outlay.

So long as the boroughs retained their garrison or political character, the question of burghal defence was, as we have seen, pre-eminently an affair of the State, the Crown discharging the liability, either by the grant of munificent aids, or by executing the necessary repairs. No doubt the burgesses (as some of the evidence quoted above seems to imply) owing to the advantages derived from good walls, quays, gates, bridges, etc., contributed in some part to their general upkeep. But the 'works' as such hardly formed part of the municipal agenda during the Middle Ages. The policy of defence was not merely a burghal one. The prospective fall of a Carnarvon or of a Beaumaris meant something more than local misfortune; it was tantamount to a possible retrogression of the Edwardian policy of settlement, and the possible secession of Wales from the grip of the English

[1] *Exchqr. K.R. Acct.* 487/4.
[2] See *Arch. Camb.*, III. ix. p. 193; *Min. Acc.* 1305/18, 19 (*temp.* Richard II.), and *ib.* 4, 9 Henry VII., and 22, 23, 27, 31 Henry VIII.
[3] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 4048.
[4] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1318-23, p. 415.
[5] *Expensæ operacionum*, e.g. *Min. Acc.* 1216/7-8 (*temp.* 28, 29 Henry VI.).
[6] *Ib.* (North Wales), 25-6 Henry VIII., No. 3.
[7] *Ib.*, 30-1 Henry VIII., No. 239.

Crown. This was as good a pretext to the burgesses in clamouring for royal aid, as it was an excuse to the Crown for interfering with matters which, under normal circumstances, would have been of purely municipal concern. The ready assistance afforded by the Crown in this respect was often expressly granted with the view of retaining English burgesses who were threatening to leave the country.[1]

It may be observed that the particular aids made for this purpose were not actually handed over to the burgesses, but that they were paid by the local chamberlain out of his general receipts. The control of the money granted to town communities for carrying out public improvements is an interesting point in the finance of the mediæval borough. It has been said that the English Crown showed more laxity in this direction than was the case in France, where special auditors were appointed to supervise the *octroi* money granted for similar purposes.[2] However, on the grant of such moneys to the boroughs of North Wales, the Crown was careful to insist that both the justice and chamberlain of the local exchequer should act as supervisors of the accounts.[3] This, too, was apparently the case when the town bailiffs were allowed so much yearly out of the issues of their borough for reparation of the town walls, etc.

During the Middle Ages, when the liability of repair fell jointly on Crown and town, especially on the former, the question of ownership of the walls would hardly be raised. As far as practical use went, it may be said that they were the walls of the borough during peace, and the walls of the castle during war, the legal ownership resting throughout in the Crown. The point of private ownership probably arose with the separation of the castle and borough economies during the post-Union epoch. The complete absorption of the divided liabilities of the Middle Ages by the town communities, would seem to be the natural concomitant of the decadence of the garrison system, and the simultaneous development in the commercial condition of the Welsh towns. Both of these are evident features in the history

[1] See *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 12,729.

[2] *Histoire de Libourne*, 1845, 3 vols., by R. Guinodie. Vol. ii. p. 128. Cf. *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 24/2.

[3] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13,687 (endorsed) 'mandetur Justiciario et Camerario Northwalliæ quod supervideant compotum centum librarum infra contentarum et certificent Regi qualiter expenduntur et quid in hac parte pro Rege melius fuerit faciendum.'

of Wales during the Elizabethan period. Beaumaris discarded its political shell in the year 1562, and in so doing took on the responsibility of repairing its walls and quays.[1] Conway followed suit at some later date,[2] but at Carnarvon the mediæval theory continued to the days of municipal reform. The corporation, to its great surprise, found before 1821, that it was not the actual owner of what the burgesses had long been accustomed to regard as their own town walls.[3]

(ii) *Agents of Defence*

The agents of defence were both royal and municipal, representing respectively the military precautions of the State, and the civic care of the town community.

1. *The Royal Agents of Defence.*—As opposed to the municipal agents of defence, these were appointed by the English Crown, and maintained out of the general issues of the Principality. They consisted chiefly of (*a*) the castle garrisons; (*b*) the town garrisons; (*c*) the 'warnesters,' or porters of the town and castle gates; and (*d*) the occasional watchmen placed on the town walls. We may consider these in further detail.

(*a*) *The Castle Garrisons.*—The permanent garrisons were not large. The normal garrisons of Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris during the greater part of the fourteenth century each included about sixteen armed men.[4] The complement of fighting men at Harlech and Criccieth was somewhat less, ten men-at-arms being placed in each. The early garrisons were constituted on the lines that the constable should retain a stipulated number of soldiers, and maintain the same out of his allotted fee. The Crown made special provision, in cases of political urgency, for all men-at-arms kept over and above the original number. For instance, an elaborate garrison, about one hundred and thirty strong, was placed at Beaumaris to curb the Anglesea insurgents who had joined the early rebellion of Madoc ap Llywelyn in 1294.[5]

[1] *Patent Roll*, 4 Elizabeth, m. 19.

[2] 'Le Key' of Conway is repaired by the Crown as late as 28 Henry VIII. (*Min. Acc., s.a.c.* North Wales).

[3] *Tourist Guide to the County of Carnarvon*, 1821 (P. B. Williams), p. 28: 'The castle and town walls are said to be vested in the King.' Cf. D. W. Pughe's *History of Carnarvon*, p. 46 (fourth edition, 1857).

[4] *Exchqr. K.R. Acct.* 17/11. A certificate showing the state of the castle garrisons in 1326.

[5] *Ib.*, 6/1. Cf. *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1313-18, p. 392.

The regularity with which the garrisons were kept up to their normal complement depended to a large extent on the personality of the constable. The Crown was not over-scrupulous in the matter, except when rumours of war were rife.[1] The constables were somewhat lax in this respect, as may be inferred from the testimony of the Conway and Beaumaris jurors when paying their homage to the Black Prince in 1344. The 'sworn men' of the town of Conway affirmed that the constable of Conway should maintain sixteen men, one chaplain, and one watchman out of his annual fee, but the fact was that he sometimes kept ten, at other times eight. At Beaumaris affairs were somewhat better, from ten to a dozen men taking the place of the normal sixteen.[2] Four years later (1348) the Black Prince instituted an inquiry into the condition of the garrison at Criccieth, with a recommendation that five men-at-arms should be employed there at a wage of four pence a day when occupied, and at half that sum when not occupied.[3] This method of the direct appointment and payment by the Crown of soldiers making up the castle garrison, became the general rule during the later Plantagenet and the early Tudor periods. The garrisons from the time of the Black Prince were of a temporary rather than a permanent character, and were periodically arranged to cope with the varying political needs of the country.[4]

Towards the end of the rule of Edward III., and throughout the reign of Richard II., the local chamberlain at Carnarvon ceased to charge himself with the expenses of garrison men in divers parts of North Wales, neither men-at-arms nor bowmen being sent out of England by the lord King or his council to garrison the castles there. This is the story of John de Wodehouse, the local chamberlain in 1378,[5] and in view of the absence of any positive evidence to the contrary, the statement may generally represent the condition of the North Welsh garrisons during the latter half of the fourteenth century. The reign of Richard II. was a comparatively peaceful one for North Wales. Mediæval Wales, however, always teemed with rumours. Some of these had attained ripened proportions by the close of the reign.

[1] See *Additional MS.* (Brit. Mus.), Roll 7198 (*temp.* 1340).
[2] *Original Documents* (*Arch. Camb.*, suppl. vol., 1877), p. clxvi.
[3] *Exchqr. T. of R. Misc. Bk.*, No. 144, ff. 92*b*, 145.
[4] See *Harl. MS.* (Brit. Mus.), Roll E, 7 (*temp.* 1370).
[5] *Min. Acc.* 1214-5.

The revolt of the Welsh under Glyndwr brought the question of English defence in Wales to the front. Too much emphasis could not be attached to the importance of the adequate garnishing of the North Welsh castles, situated as they were in the very locality where the rising took root. An additional reason for the sufficient and timely manning of the castles, was occasioned by the same district becoming involved in the struggle of the rival claimants of York and Lancaster for the English throne.

Scattered details of the history of the castle garrisons from the reign of Henry IV. to that of Henry VIII. exist here and there, particularly in the accounts of the local chamberlain. Only a few constable's accounts have survived, giving the names and numbers of the garrison soldiers, with the length, period, and cost of their service.[1] The *Patent and Close Rolls* yield some evidence, as do the *Royal Letters*[2] and the *Acts of the Privy Council*.[3] These authorities give sound facts as to the condition of the garrisons at certain dates, but the continued status is marred by several *lacunæ* in the sequence of the evidence. In most cases it may obviously be assumed that the garrisons, during the periods intervening between the dates of which we have evidence, were much the same.

Taking first the case of Carnarvon, which from the point of view of defence was undoubtedly the most important castle in the Principality during the Middle Ages. During the first eleven years of the reign of Henry IV. the castle was continually guarded by a permanent garrison of about fourteen men,[4] consisting of two men-at-arms and a dozen archers. During the third and ninth years of the same reign small armies of a hundred, and seventy strong respectively, were stationed there. The permanent garrison apparently remained unchanged till 1444.[5] On the 5th of February in this year, seven additional soldiers were added to the usual garrison, making the total number of defenders a round score.[6] This was the exact number in 1455.[7] On the 28th of May 1460 the garrison is described as containing two less.[8] As a general rule, it was usual to specify the number

[1] *Exchqr. K.R. Accts.* 43/24, 43/39 are instances in point. Cf. *Arch. Camb.*, III. viii. pp. 123, 129.
[2] Ed. Ellis (*temp.* Henry IV.). [3] Ed. Nicolas.
[4] *Min. Acc.* 1216-2 and ref. 1 above.
[5] *Ib.*, 1216-3 (6 Henry V.), and 4 (13 Henry VI.). [6] *Ib.*, 1216-7.
[7] *Ib.*, 1217-2. [8] *Ib.*, 1217-3 (eighteen soldiers at four pence a day).

of soldiers maintainable by the Crown upon the appointment of a new constable, which number under ordinary circumstances remained the same during his term of office. Thomas Montgomery, appointed constable of Carnarvon in the first year of Edward IV., held the office throughout the reign. He received the wages of twenty-four soldiers every year, as did his successor, William Stanley, who took up the constableship 6th June 1484.[1] Richard Pole, succeeding Stanley 21st April 1495, only received allowance for twelve men.[2] No soldiers are charged to the Crown during the governorship of Thomas Heton, who held the office for a period of ten months in 1506.[3] John Puleston, the next constable, who held office throughout the reign of Henry VIII., had a wage allowance for thirty-six soldiers during the first seven years of the reign.[4] No soldiers were charged to the Crown after this date.

Conway, in point of administrative and military significance, was not so important as Carnarvon. Its permanent garrison, however, during the revolt of Glyndwr, was virtually the same, consisting of fourteen men.[5] This number had dwindled to six [6] by 1418. There is no apparent increase in the number of the garrison until 1441, when twelve more soldiers were stationed in the castle.[7] The letters patent, appointing Henry Bolde to the governorship of the castle in 1461, nominally specify the castle and town garrisons to contain as many as forty-eight soldiers. In reality there were only twenty-four, twelve manning the castle, and a like number protecting the town and its walls.[8] Similar numbers served under Thomas Dunstalt [9] and Richard Pole up to the year 1503.[10] Only twelve Crown soldiers resided at Conway in 1504,[11] and they were apparently the last. Edward Salysbury, who succeeded to the constableship 4th January 1505, and his kinsman, John Salysbury, following him 6th October 1512 down to the close of Henry VIII.'s reign, have no money allowance beyond their annual stipend of £50.[12]

Beaumaris, from the circumstances of its situation in the island of Anglesea, stood next to Carnarvon in point of military

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1217-4-7; *ib.*, Henry VII., Nos. 1591-4; Campbell's *Materials for the History of Henry VII.*, i. p. 258.
[2] *Min. Acc.*, Henry VII., Nos. 1595-8. [3] *Ib.*, No. 1599.
[4] *Ib.*, 1600-1, and 7 Henry VIII. (North Wales), No. 127.
[5] *Ib.*, 1216/1-2. [6] *Ib.*, 1216-3. [7] *Ib.*, 1216-7, 8; 1217/1, 2.
[8] *Ib.*, 1217/4-6. [9] *Ib.*, 7. [10] *Ib.*, Henry VII., Nos. 1591-7.
[11] *Ib.* 1598. [12] *Ib.*, Henry VII. and VIII. *passim.*

importance. Several small and temporary garrisons were stationed there on the outbreak of Glyndwr's rebellion. The ordinary garrison comprised about a dozen men.[1] It fell to half this number under Henry v. and during the greater part of the reign of Henry vi.[2] In June 1446 the garrison was increased to twelve, and was further supplemented on the last day of May in the following year by nine more men, one of whom acted as chaplain. It was similarly constituted in 1455,[3] and probably remained so to the close of William Beauchamp's term of office as constable in 1460. Under John Butler, Henry vi.'s last constable of Beaumaris, the garrison had fallen to the small number of six soldiers and one priest.[4] Edward iv., alive to the Lancastrian tendencies of the North Welsh during the first five years of his reign, allowed his new constable, William Hastings, the money wages of forty-eight soldiers.[5] Half this number (as at Conway) were kept during the remaining years of his reign. Twenty-four men also served under Richard Huddlestone, constable during the reign of Richard iii.,[6] as again under Stanley, who succeeded him in the next reign.[7] Crofte, the appointed constable during the years 10-16 Henry vii., was allowed the wages of twelve soldiers only.[8] There were evidently no soldiers under Rowland Bulkeley, who held the constableship from 4th July 1502 to 3rd July 1509.[9] Under his notorious successor, Sir Rowland Viellvile, the garrison is said to have been wholly withdrawn. Moreover, during the first nine years of his constableship, Sir Rowland successfully claimed and enjoyed the garrison fees of forty-eight soldiers.[10] But from 1518-36 he simply received a fee of forty marks, no wages being allowed in respect of soldiers placed in the castle.[11] There were no soldiers kept in the castle during the later years of his constableship, nor again during the successive constableships of Henry Norres [12] and Richard Bulkeley in the same reign.[13]

Harlech castle, from the fact of its occupation by the native Welsh for a more considerable period than any of its neighbouring

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1216/1-3. [2] *Ib.*, 1153/1, 3.
[3] Also 1450, 1451, and 1454. *Min. Acc.* 1216/7-8, 1217/1, 2.
[4] *Ib.*, 1217/3. [5] *Ib.*, 1217/4-6. [6] *Ib.*, No. 7.
[7] *Ib.*, Henry vii., Nos. 1591-4. [8] *Ib.*, Nos. 1595-7.
[9] *Ib.*, Nos. 1598-1601; *ib.*, Henry viii., No. 16.
[10] *Ib.*, 7 Henry viii., No. 127. [11] *Ib.*, 27 Henry viii., No. 163.
[11] *Ib.* (North Wales), 28 Henry viii., No. 175. [13] *Ib.*, 26-38 Henry viii.

castles, has a peculiarly exciting yet obscure history. Little is known as to the number of the garrison during the troublous times of Glyndwr.[1] About a dozen soldiers were stationed there during the reign of Henry v. and the first twenty years of Henry vi.'s rule.[2] This number was doubled under the governorship of Edward Hampden in 1444.[3] The castle was in the hands of the Welsh during the years 5-8 Edward iv.[4] On its recovery a garrison of twenty-four was placed there. Richard iii. had twenty soldiers there at one time, and as many as sixty at another time.[5] The normal garrison under Richard Pole during the reign of Henry vii. was twenty-four up to the last year of his office (1504), when it suddenly fell to twelve.[6] Hugh Lewis, who succeeded Richard Pole as constable on 28th December 1505, was paid a round fee of £50, with no garrison allowance.[7] Peter Stanley, following Pole, took the old fee of forty marks, together with wage allowances for twenty-four soldiers, during the first five years of his constableship (2-7 Henry viii.).[7] Thenceforward he received a fee of £50, which probably carried with it the liability of maintaining porters and other servants required for the sufficient keeping of the castle. Francis Bryan enjoyed the same fee during the first thirty years of his office (13-34 Henry viii.), but so nominal and honorary had the duty become, that he only received £10[8] during the last four years of Henry's reign.

This brings our statistical survey of the North Welsh garrisons during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to a close. It would appear that the castles ceased to be garrisoned for military purposes towards the close of the reign of Henry vii., except during their temporary resuscitation at the time of the Civil War. The old-time function of the castle as a restraining power on the Welsh inhabitants of the surrounding hamlets, came to an end with the reign of Henry Tudor.

A letter dated 9th April 1539, and written by Sir Richard Bulkeley (then Justiciar of North Wales) to Thomas Cromwell, indicates the non-military character of the North Welsh castles during the reigns of Henry vii. and Henry viii. Not one of them was in a state of defence. Bulkeley, indeed, asserts

[1] See below, pp. 250-3. [2] *Min. Acc.* 1216/3-4, 1204-5. [3] *Ib.*, 1216/7-8.
[4] *Ib.*, 1217/4-6. [5] *Ib.*, 1217-7.
[6] *Ib.*, Henry vii., Nos. 1597-8.
[7] *Ib.*, 1598-1610; 1 Henry viii. (Merioneth), No. 16.
[8] *Ib.* (North Wales), 34-7 Henry viii.

that the King's castles in North Wales were wholly unfurnished with any means of defence, saving eight or ten pieces in the castle of Beaumaris, with two or three barrels of powder and some shot. . . . Conway, Carnarvon, and Harlech, he further says, could not be defended for an hour. In the same letter he begs a couple of gunners and some good ordnance and powder for the defence of Beaumaris, which stood in most jeopardy.[1]

The predominant danger at this time was not so much domestic as foreign. Bulkeley sought to defend the castle not against the Welsh, but against the King's enemies in France and Ireland. Henry Tudor's remarkable charter to the North Welshmen in 1507 had removed many of the grievances which justified the existence of the mediæval castles. This ordained equal burghal and commercial privileges to English and Welsh, with the result that the North Welsh castles soon lost their primary military importance, which during the Middle Ages was decidedly local. Henceforward it was the defence of Wales rather than of the English burgesses in Wales that engaged the attention of the Government and the local authorities. The same charter, too, released the inhabitants of the surrounding castle districts from their castle services, thus depriving the castles of their mediæval associations. About the same time the garrison men disappeared, and the old edifices showed signs of physical decay. The latter, as we have premised, was in some part stayed by the administrative use to which some of the castle towers and chambers were put. With the building of shire halls and county gaols, their importance, apart from the fee that was nominally associated with the office of keeper, is almost solely confined to their antiquarian interest. In Henry VII.'s charter to the North Welshmen we have the key to the transition in idea from the mediæval to the modern castle.

A word may be said in conclusion respecting the subsidiary officers, who superintended the victualling, repairing, and other routine business connected with the efficiency of the castle garrisons. The original arrangements were of a most elaborate character. The *vadia officiariorum* amounted to a considerable annual sum. The most important of these officers were—(1) the *custodes victualium*, upon whom the responsibility of providing articles of food and provender fell; (2) the *attilliatores* or military superintendents, who cared for the weapons of attack

[1] *Letters and Papers Henry VIII.*, xiv., No. 732.

and the armour of defence, with the requisite materials for their repair; (3) the *cementarius* or master mason, and other artisans employed on the castle works.[1] At the outset, when the castles were being built, each castle had representative officers of every class. But when the preliminary works were done, towards the middle of the fourteenth century, itinerant officers were appointed with general powers of supervision over the divers requirements of the castles of North Wales, including those of Flint and Rhuddlan, and sometimes Chester. There are several instances of masters of the castle works, master plumbers, and later, master gunners or cannoneers, appointed for these castles during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[2] The only offices that survive during the Elizabethan period and later are those of the constable and janitor.

(*b*) *Town Garrisons.*—The custody of both the castle and town was usually vested in the hands of the constable of the castle, and the soldiers of the castle garrison. Moreover, special circumstances calling for increased protection during the revolt of Glyndwr, and the unsettled period of the Lancastrian and Yorkist factions, led to the establishment of small town garrisons in the three typical English boroughs of North Wales. The capital borough of Carnarvon came in for most attention in this respect. This policy gave rise to the new office of the captaincy of the town, each company of town soldiers being under the control of a captain. The normal stipend of a captain was eight pence *per diem*, the ordinary soldier taking half the amount.[3] These town garrisons were of a temporary character, and varied considerably in number. During the Tudor period they were either wholly abolished or else indistinctly associated with the soldiers of the castle. This was inevitable when, as was generally the case, the constableship of the castle and the captaincy of the town became incorporated in one and the same person.

William de Tranmere, assisted for some time by one John de Bostock, was the acting captain at Carnarvon during the rising of Glyndwr. The company under his command ranged from fifteen to twenty-five in number. To them in great part belonged the honour of repelling the successive sieges to which the town was subjected by Owen and his French followers.[4] There was

[1] Particulars will be found in the extant chamberlain accounts of North Wales.
[2] *Cal. Patent Rolls* (*s.n.c.*).
[3] *Min. Acc.* 1216-7.
[4] *Exchqr. K.R. Accts.* 43/24, 35, 39.

no distinct captain after this, the office being attached to that of the constable. We sometimes find notices of town garrisons nominally distinct from those of the castle. During the years 1450-5 there were 'five soldiers of the town' at Carnarvon.[1] In 1460 the united garrisons of the town and castle numbered eighteen, and were placed there in the May of this year 'for the safe custody of the castle and town.'[2] A distinct town garrison of twelve again appears at Carnarvon during the years 5-8 Edward IV., when the English cause at Harlech was in sore jeopardy.[3] In the reign of Richard III. the castle and town garrisons are united, not to be separated again.[4] The constable of the castle continued to enjoy the emoluments of the office of captaincy down to the close of the reign of Henry VII.,[5] when the captain's distinctive fee of £12. 13s. 4d. per annum was merged in the increased fee of the constable.[6]

At Conway there were several minor town garrisons at different periods during the years 1401-4, under the dual captaincy of Hugh Morton and Reginald Bayldon. Two men-at-arms and twenty-four bowmen under their control, defended the town at divers intervals during this period.[7] A small town garrison was apparently kept there to the end of the reign of Henry IV.[8] John Norres, captain of the town in 1419, had one man-at-arms and nine bowmen at his command.[9] The office of captain was subsequently attached to the constableship, but during the years 21-33 Henry VI., eight bowmen were specially appointed to guard the town of Conway.[10] This number was increased to twelve during the critical years of Edward IV.'s early rule in North Wales.[11] The town garrison of a subsequent date is no longer distinguishable from that of the castle. Richard Pole was the last officer who received separate fees in virtue of his position as constable of the castle and captain of the town.[12] Edward Salysbury, his successor, took a combined fee of £50 in respect of both offices.[13]

On the 16th of July 1439, we find one Thomas Norreys

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1216-7, 1217-1-2.
[2] *Ib.*, 1217/3.
[3] *Ib.*, 1217/4-6.
[4] *Ib.*, 1217/7.
[5] William Stanley was the last to receive the fees of constable and of captain at Carnarvon, as also at Beaumaris (*ib.*, Henry VII., No. 1594).
[6] *Ib.*, No. 1595.
[7] Ref. 4 on preceding page.
[8] *Min. Acc.* 1216/1-2.
[9] *Ib.*, 1216-3.
[10] *Ib.*, 1216/7-8, 1217/1-2.
[11] Ref. 3 above.
[12] *Min. Acc.*, Henry VII., Nos. 1597-8.
[13] *Ib.*, No. 1599.

appointed captain of the town of Beaumaris with a small group of five soldiers under him called 'warnesters.' This is the earliest known reference to the office of captain at Beaumaris.[1] Distinct town garrisons of twenty-four and twelve appear during the eventful years 5-8 Edward IV. under the supervision of the constable, who acted as captain.[2] William Stanley received the separate fees pertaining to the respective offices of constable and captain,[3] but again his immediate successor, Richard Crofte, appointed in 1505, takes a round fee in respect of both.[4] It is fairly certain that distinct town garrisons, as opposed to those of the castles in Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris, disappeared with the reign of Edward IV.

(c) *Porters of the Castle and Town Gates.*—There were porters in all the castellated boroughs of North Wales.[5] However, only in the more purely English towns of Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris did the janitorship acquire any prominence as a distinct and lasting office. Porters of the castle appear sometimes to be distinct from those of the town, but the janitorship evidently included the custody of the town gates. The person holding this office was often indiscriminately described as porter of the castle and keeper of the town gates.

The office of *janitor* of the town of Carnarvon may be traced with some degree of continuity from the time of Edward II.[6] That of Conway goes back to the date of the appointment by the Black Prince of John Clerk of Tuttebury as porter of the castle of Conway.[7] The first notice of a *janitor* at Beaumaris belongs to the reign of Henry VI., though the office may have existed long before.[8]

At Carnarvon during the reigns of Richard II.[9] and Henry IV.[10] five 'warnesters' or 'keepers' guarded the town gates. During the same time Henry Fleming [9] and John Hulle [10] successively appear as porters of the castle. Five 'warnesters of the King' appear again in the reign of Henry VI. (1436-55),[11] but no porters of the castle are mentioned. Under Edward IV. and subsequent sovereigns, the office of janitor was held by one

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1216/7-8.
[2] *Ib.*, 1217/4-6.
[3] *Ib.*, Henry VII., No. 1594.
[4] *Ib.*, 1595.
[5] *Welsh Roll*, 13 Edward I., m. 3.
[6] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 202.
[7] *Min. Acc.* 1214/5.
[8] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1377-81, p. 457. Cf. *Min. Acc.* 1215/8.
[9] *Ib.*, 1214/5, 1215/10.
[10] *Ib.*, 1216/1.
[11] *Ib.*, 1216/4-7, 1217/1-2.

person only at an annual stipend of £6. 1s. 8d.[1] The gates of Conway were guarded by four royal 'warnesters' in 1435, and a like number continued in office to the close of the reign.[2] There was only one janitor during the Tudor period,[3] and, as at Carnarvon, the office continued down to the Stuart days.[4]

One keeper kept the three gates of Beaumaris towards the close of the fifteenth century, and received a stipend of two pence per gate each day.[5] No janitor appears during the Tudor period,[3] though Rowland Bulkeley, the constable (17-24 Henry VII.), is allowed four pence per day in respect of his fee.[6]

(*d*) *Royal Watchmen* (*vigilatores*).—Watchmen appear commonly among the ordinary members of the early garrisons. The constable of Beaumaris had to provide a watchman at his own expense. The *vigilatores* or royal sentinels described here, may be regarded as extraordinary watchmen, and are only met with in the case of Carnarvon for short intervals during the reigns of Richard II., Henry IV., Henry VI., and Edward IV.

North Wales during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was pre-eminently the land of prophecy and rumour. The safeguarding of Carnarvon—the central intelligence department whence news of any untoward events was generally promulgated —was a matter of prime importance. This alone explains the appearance of special sentinels on the town walls.

One Richard Ince spent about six hundred nights on the walls of Carnarvon during the years 7-12 Richard II. owing to the rumours of a Scottish invasion.[7] The tower which he occupied was for a long time after called Ince's tower.[8] Towards the close of the same reign, when Glyndwr's great revolt was gradually brewing, one Roger Sparrowe was deputed to carry on special night watches on the town walls. A literal version of the Latin of the original document expresses the object thus: 'For the safe custody of the town, and the assurance of greater security to the burgesses inhabiting it, owing to the sinister movements of the King's adversaries.'[9] The number of sentinels was increased to three when the revolt was in progress.[10] Two watchmen, named Robert Dovere and Robert Bowman, kept

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1217/4-6.
[2] Ref. 11 on preceding page.
[3] *Min. Acc.*, Henry VII., VIII. *passim*.
[4] *Ib.* (James I.).
[5] *Ib.*, 1153-6.
[6] *Ib.*, Henry VII., 1598-1601.
[7] *Ib.*, 1214/10-12, 1215/1.
[8] E.g. *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 7/11. Ince died 19 Richard II. (*Min. Acc.* 1174/5).
[9] *Min. Acc.* 1215/8, 10.
[10] *Ib.*, 1216/1.

careful watch on the town walls from Easter, 37 Henry VI., to the Easter next following,[1] and whilst the Welsh were investing Harlech (5-8 Edward IV.), Carnarvon was incessantly watched by one Gilbert Wode and two comrades, whose names are given.[2] This is the last we hear of the royal sentinels. Their normal stipend was two pence for watch by day and four pence for watch by night.

This concludes our survey of the royal agents of defence. It has incidentally thrown some light on the comparative importance of the respective boroughs in the English policy of defence during the period of settlement. The brunt of the defence, as we have seen, fell upon the castellated boroughs of Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris. Of these Carnarvon, the chief administrative centre, was almost always on the *qui vive* as to Welsh movements in the surrounding districts. The castle of Harlech was the sole bulwark of royal defence in Merionethshire. Criccieth, its nearest ally in the adjoining county of Carnarvon, decayed with the revolt of Glyndwr. The part played by the manorial boroughs, as also by the castellated boroughs *qua* boroughs, is treated below in a consideration of the civic means of defence.

It is interesting to find that a 'garrison place' consisting of six houses was established at Bala during the insurrection of Glyndwr, built and maintained at the royal expense. The six houses described as being placed in the *garnestura* of Bala, were farmed by Walter Elesmere in the first year of Henry V. for a term of six years at an annual rent of 6s. 8d. Walter had to repair the houses at his own cost, being bounden to return the same on the expiration of his lease in good and sound condition, unless in the meantime some soldiers of the King were not ordered there.[3] The houses were apparently built of timber. In 1427 they are said to have been 'long since burnt.'[4] Nothing further is known of them.

We now proceed briefly to deal with the question of burghal defence in its relation to the civic organisation of the mediæval borough.

2. *The Civic Agents of Defence.*—There is but very scant evidence to illustrate the methods adopted by the community of burgesses for the purpose of defence, as distinguished from the

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1217/3.
[2] *Ib.*, 1217/4-6.
[3] *Ib.*, 1203/10.
[4] *Ib.*, 1204/1.

precautions taken by the Crown. The attention of the latter was directed especially to the castellated boroughs. In respect of the means of civic defence, the North Welsh boroughs present no striking departure from what was the usual rule in the generality of boroughs at that time. There was the customary view of arms, the typical organisation of the Town Leet, and the same careful observance of the common duty of watch and ward.

There is perhaps one feature in connection with the defence of the North Welsh boroughs, which is peculiar to them as compared with contemporary boroughs in England. For instance, it was ordained that no Welshman should bear arms either of defence or offence in the English boroughs of North Wales.[1] This, no doubt, served to minimise 'the danger from the Welsh around,' so terrible a reality to the inhabitants of the English boroughs of Mediæval Wales. The dread was particularly felt in the Marcher boroughs, as also in all English boroughs of the Principality where a Welsh element formed part of the borough populace. The secret alliances of kindred Welsh in town and country often spelt dire ruin to the municipality.[2] In North Wales an early ordinance nominally forbade to Welshmen the privilege of residence in English boroughs. It was revived in the penal statutes of Henry IV. Again, the danger of concerted action on the part of the rural Welsh, was to some extent obviated by the Conqueror's order against Welsh congregations in North Wales for the purpose of common council and drafting of propositions. Such meetings were to be suffered by royal licence only.[3] Other contemporary injunctions guarded the burgesses against the disturbing influences of the local bard and ballad singer.[4] The glowing prospects of the British race as foretold in prophecy, were as inspiring a theme to the mediæval Welsh as are the national anthems to peoples of our own time. The North Welsh boroughs were legally protected against the many-sided dangers of their political environment; in this respect they differed from English boroughs situated in districts where the factor of race was not considered.

All boroughs, without exception, were alive to the question of defence. The presence of enemies at home and abroad made preparation for the emergency of war a matter of moment.

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 131-2.
[2] *R.H.S. Trans.* (New Series), xvii. p. 171, n. 2.
[3] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 132.
[4] *Ib.*, p. 132.

The well-being of the community also depended to a large extent upon the efficiency of the local system for the strict detection and safe capture of robbers and other evil-doers. There was, too, the additional onus of bearing their share as units in the organised system of national defence.

To ensure this, a strict view of arms took place twice a year according to the rule laid down by the Statute of Winchester. In this way the North Welsh burgesses clearly showed that their claim to be the guardians of the peace in North Wales during the King's sojourn abroad was no vain boast.[1] The presentment of arms every six months kept the town authorities well informed as to the condition of the military *posse* of their borough. The question of defence was, in fact, a regular item in the routine business of the Town Leet.

Every burgess of the mediæval borough was armed. He was in duty bound to hold his burgage in a defensible position. Some inquest returns, detailing the goods and chattels of deceased burgesses, throw incidental light on the weapons employed. They include swords, knives, armlets, doublets, spurs, and *sopæ* (apparently a knotted stick used for military purposes).[2] A defensible burgage was not complete without its quota of victuals.

A presentment preserved in an early court roll of the town of Carnarvon makes this quite clear. The jurors in the Summer Leet of 1321, after presenting that all burgesses put in their appearance at the Leet, add that four and a half burgages of one Thomas de Esthalle were empty of men and victuals, and that they contained nothing *for the defence of the town* if it were necessary.[3] Evidently the burgesses carefully estimated their prospects of defence in the event of a siege of their borough. The poor of the town of Carnarvon suffered severely during the temporary blockade of the town by the forces of Owen Glyndwr. They were, however, somewhat relieved by drawing from the castle stores.

The necessity of appearing at the Court Leet, and of keeping the burgage in a 'defensible' position, represented the main feature of the civic means of burghal defence, which one author has described as a system of universal conscription. Every burgess was subjected to a rigorous military discipline.[4] The terrors of war were thus removed.

[1] See above, p. 72.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1170/19.
[3] *Court Rolls* (P.R.O.), 215/46.
[4] Green, *Town Life, etc.*, i. p. 127.

Moreover, there were the perils of peace to be overcome. The precautions taken to meet the contingency of war frequently proved detrimental to the ordinary peace of the borough. Assaults, battery, and other acts of violence were often committed through a misuse of the arms of defence. The borough courts, of course, remedied most of these defects. For the apprehending of thieves, rogues, and other evil-doers from without as well as within the borough, the universal system of watch and ward was enforced by the Statute of Winchester in 1285.[1] One of the oaths taken by the North Welsh burgess on his admission to the privileges of a borough, was that of scot and lot with his fellow-burgesses,[2] by which he signified his willingness to bear his share in the personal as well as in the fiscal responsibilities of the community.[3] The commonest of the personal duties was that of watch and ward, each burgess being bound to take his turn in keeping nightly watch and ward in the streets. The court rolls of contemporary English boroughs in England show frequent defaulters in respect of its performance. The records of the North Welsh boroughs tell us little or nothing of watch and ward. There is nothing to show that its normal exercise was in any way modified by the exceptional circumstances of the castellated boroughs, though it is quite feasible that some temporary disarrangement was caused when the boroughs were almost entirely in the hands of the military. In any case it was watch and ward in a royal rather than a private sense; the town gates and town walls, and even the town streets, belonged to the Crown rather than to the borough community. We may add that the statutory 'watch and ward' could not be literally carried out in such of the boroughs of North Wales as were unenclosed.

So much for the defence of the North Welsh boroughs during the period of settlement. Throughout there was no apparent conflict between the royal and civic agents of defence. The fact that the castellated boroughs by virtue of their political importance were inseparably connected with the castle, gives an extra-municipal character to the whole question of their defence. The apparatus as well as the agents were pre-eminently royal. One significant feature is the almost entire disappearance

[1] *Stat. of Realm* (Rec. Com.), i. p. 97. [2] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 187.
[3] Merewether and Stephens, *Hist. of Boroughs, etc.*, p. 67.

of the royal agents of defence towards and during the early Tudor period, a circumstance concomitant with the decay of the castles and their garrisons. This tendency emphasises the change that was taking place in the environment of the North Welsh boroughs towards the close of the period of settlement. It coincides with the decline of the period of racial politics in Wales, and shows how, politically, Wales was preparing for the Act of Union. From the data we have of the means of burghal defence, it appears that the reign of Henry VII. forms an important period of transition. During, and after his time, the castle lost its military importance, and the town defence is thrown more and more upon civic resources; the townsmen were able to sustain the liability through being partakers in the general commercial prosperity to which Henry's rule gave rise.

II. The Peace of the Borough

The distinctive feature of the mediæval borough was its independent judiciary. This, in fact, was the essential feature of the *liber burgus*.[1] And this continued to be the prevailing trait of burgess-ship during the late sixteenth and the following centuries, when the methods of land tenure had long since lost their old significance. The jurisdictional immunities of the free borough marked it off as a separate hundred of the county. The burgesses were again, legally speaking, further removed from the common or rural folk of the county by the acquisition of other additional privileges. The borough was a hundred or commote in itself,[2] and its inhabitants were hundred or borough men. Asked as to the proof of their burgess-ship in 1590, the burgesses of Pwllheli affirmed that they were sworn before their bailiffs in their own Court Leet, and that they were admitted as *burgesses* before the Justice of Assize.[3] The problems of jurisdiction and government were closely related during the Middle Ages. The general administration of the borough was for the most part carried on at the instance of the borough court. The deliberative organ of burghal government was the court, not the town council. It remains to be seen what jurisdictional privileges the borough enjoyed, and in what way they were exercised.

[1] Cf. Merewether and Stephens, *Hist. of Boroughs, etc.*, p. xii.

[2] The borough of Criccieth is termed a 'commote' in the accounts *temp.* Henry IV.

[3] *Exchqr. Spec. Comm.*, No. 3381.

(*a*) *Jurisdictional Privileges of the Borough.*—The more important of these privileges are included in the clauses of the original charters. The *non-intromittat* clause was doubtless the most prized, because it forbade the intermeddling of the sheriff. The burgesses were no longer amenable to the sheriff's tourn. They held their own leets, and had the return of all writs, precepts, and other processes issued by their bailiffs touching matters arising within their franchise. They also had the cognisance of all pleas of debts, covenants, trespasses, committed or contracted within the liberty of the borough. The sheriff's jurisdiction was thus limited to the case of Crown pleas.[1]

The borough courts exercised a minor criminal jurisdiction by virtue of the privileges of sok and sak, toll and team, and infangenethef, which were granted to all the North Welsh boroughs. The burgesses have themselves defined the significance of these terms in their respective replies to a writ of *quo warranto* of the fourteenth century.[2] *Sok* implied the right of appearance at the borough courts of all the borough residents when impleaded or whenever their presence was necessary. *Sak* co-instituted the right to take the cognisance of such pleas. *Toll* empowered the burgesses to receive tolls of all goods bought and sold within the boundaries of their local mart. *Team*, which carried with it the right of holding town courts in which outsiders or non-borough men could be vouched as warrantors,[3] the North Welsh burgesses left unexplained.

The independent judiciary of the borough thus extended to all matters excepting those of life and limb, and other capital offences of the Crown. In the case of Crown pleas, the burgesses were answerable to the royal courts periodically held by the local Justiciar and other subordinate officers of the North Welsh Principality. In these courts, however, they enjoyed the right of trial by juries drawn from their own members. In this way the Englishery of the borough were protected in their judicial trials against the Welshery of the county. A law-suit often assumed racial proportions, but even after the disappearance of racial politics as such, the borough men continued to enjoy their distinctive privilege to a comparatively modern date.

[1] See below, p. 136.

[2] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 160, 164, 176, 180, 194, 197. See *Hist. of English Law* (Pollock and Maitland), i. p. 564.

[3] *Ib.* (Pollock and Maitland), i. p. 504.

The burgesses were also privileged by their foundation charters with the liberty of a free prison. This was for the safe custody of all prisoners that came within the purview of their jurisdiction. Upon the release of every prisoner so taken, the town bailiffs took a fee of four pence for the common weal of the borough.[1] In the case of Crown pleas the burgesses, as others, were liable to imprisonment in the adjoining or nearest castle. The burgesses, however, had the express option of good and sufficient bail.

The original charters contained other jurisdictional privileges which were incident to the person of the burgess rather than to the institution of the borough, and extended in their purport to districts beyond the borough franchise. They were four in number, and dealt mostly with matters of commerce.

The first provided against the arresting of the goods and chattels of burgesses wheresoever in the King's lands and dominions, for any debt of which they were not the sureties or principal debtors, excepting cases where they (1) were debtors in common, or (2) had the power to pay their debts in whole or in part, or (3) in the case of default of justice to the creditors of the same debt. The second privilege guarded the burgesses against the confiscation of their goods (upon showing sufficient proof of ownership) in the event of any acts of forfeiture by their servants. The third enabled the heirs of burgesses to succeed freely to their goods and chattels in case they died intestate. By the fourth and last privilege, which was the cause of no little trouble and commotion in Wales throughout the later Middle Ages, the burgesses were entitled to self-trial within certain limited districts; they were to be convicted only at the finding of their own co-burgesses, and that in all cases excepting matters touching the commonalty of the borough, in which event they nominally resorted to the privileges of Hereford.[2]

The district within which the burgesses of Carnarvon were allowed the enjoyment of this privilege, comprised the country to the west of the rivers Conway and Dovey, corresponding roughly to the modern counties of Carnarvon and Merioneth. The privileged district of the Conway burgesses extended from Carnarvon to the river Clwyd. Between the banks of the

[1] *Rec. of Carn.* (as on preceding page); *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1307-13, p. 525.
[2] *Rec. of Carn.* (as on preceding page).

Seiont in Carnarvon and the banks of the Dovey in Merioneth, lay the common privileged territory of both Harlech and Criccieth. The burgesses of Beaumaris enjoyed the right of trial by their own co-burgesses throughout the length and breadth of the isle of Anglesea, as did the men of Bala in the county of Merioneth. The burgesses of Newborough were similarly enfranchised in the county of Anglesea, and also in the district between the Conway and the Dee. Why Newborough should be so privileged between the Conway and the Dee is not clear. There is nothing to show that members of an affiliated borough were entitled to exercise this privilege in the district of their mother-town. The jurisdictional privileges of Rhuddlan, the mother-town of Newborough, in this respect, extended to the county of Flint and the lands between the Conway and the Dee.[1]

No districts were specified in the cases of Nevin and Pwllheli, but from analogy with the parallel manorial boroughs of Bala and Newborough, such districts would extend in each case to the county of Carnarvon. The privilege was doubtless less prized in the smaller and purely Welsh boroughs. It was apparently exercised only by the inhabitants of the typical English boroughs. It was their common boast that the Conqueror had ordained that they should not be convicted by any 'foreign' men upon any appeals within certain bounds.[2] Moreover, they sometimes abused the privilege. The burgesses of Conway were once severely admonished for unjust exercise of their jurisdictional privileges,[3] and stirring law-suits were carried on by the foreign men of the upper cantreds against the English burgesses of the parallel boroughs at Flint and Rhuddlan.[4] It would be interesting to know the date at which these nominal borough districts ceased to have any legal significance.[5]

(*b*) *The Borough Courts.*—Having treated of the jurisdictional privileges enjoyed by each borough, we may proceed to the consideration of their practice. The exclusion of the county sheriffs, and the narrowing of the old commote jurisdiction, left the holding of the new Courts Baron and Leet in the hands of the town community. Besides these, there were the Courts of

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 175. [2] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13,029.
[3] *Add. MS. Ch.* (Brit. Mus.), 333,372, f. 5*b*.
[4] *Chancery Files* (P.R.O.), New Series, No. 205. [5] See below, p. 142.

Piepowder, or the courts incident to the local market and fair. The extant records of the actual proceedings of the North Welsh borough courts between 1284 and 1536 are not many. These few, however, in the absence of other sources, throw some light on the character of the courts and their function in maintaining the peace and good government of the borough.

All told, the extant court rolls chronicle the business of less than two hundred courts, and are distributed among the four boroughs of Carnarvon, Conway, Criccieth, and Bala,[1] between the years 1301 and 1332 thus :—

Name of Borough.	Description of Court.			Piepowder.	Assize of Bread.
	Three Weeks' Court. No.	Leet.	Fair Courts		
Carnarvon, .	47	6	6	14	2
Conway, . .	39	4	...	Not specified	...
Criccieth, .	70	7	9	1	...
Bala, . . .	...	3	...	...	...

The court rolls were important factors in the administrative machinery of the mediæval borough. In one court we find the bailiffs amerced for appearing without the rolls of the previous court.[2] The courts, of course, had a money value. The *rotuli placitorum* kept an authentic record of the names of the suitors, with the causes and amounts of their fines and amercements.[3] Some of the above rolls appear in an account form, merely giving the headings of the amercements. Others have a more extended form, and are consequently of greater value as historical sources.[4] In fifty-five of the courts reported in the above rolls, there were no cases for trial; beyond reflecting on the pacific state of the boroughs, their historic value is confined to the bald enumeration of the dates at which the courts were held. We may consider each of the borough courts separately.

1. *The Court Leet and the View of Frank-pledge.*—Sometimes called the great tourn as compared with the sheriff's tourn of

[1] See chronological list of court rolls in the Appendix.
[2] *Court Rolls*, portf. 215/47.
[3] E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1170/3.
[4] E.g. *Court Rolls*, portf. 215/46.

the county, and sometimes great or large court as opposed to the small or little courts of the borough.[1] It constituted the central feature of burghal life during the Middle Ages. It endowed the municipality with the character of an independent hundred (or commote), with its judicial and police functions. It was the most active organ of the borough executive, and was, in short, the chief governing body.

The Leet, as in the hundred,[2] was generally held twice a year, at Easter and Michaelmas. But the few early records of the North Welsh borough leets show some variations: the Michaelmas tourn falling generally in one or other of the months of September, October, and November, and the Easter tourn ranging in point of time from March to July. The proceedings of some twenty leets have survived, of which Bala claims three, Conway four, Carnarvon six, and Criccieth seven.

There is nothing in the rolls that indicates the place where the leets were held. Two centuries later they were certainly held in the town and gild halls, where such buildings existed.[3] We find a ' common house ' at Conway in the reign of Henry VIII.[4] A general assembly of the burgesses of Nevin, late in the sixteenth century, took place in the open air in the churchyard of the town. The Court Leet was usually presided over by the mayor and bailiffs. The common jury generally consisted of twelve sworn burgesses,[5] though at Criccieth we only find eight on three occasions.[6]

The method of choosing the Leet jury is somewhat obscure. A late survival of the old mediæval custom, however, appeared in Flint at the time of the Municipal Reform Commission. The evidence taken at this time explains the process of the election of the jury in the castellated borough there, which, with possible reservations, we may take to have been the case in the parallel boroughs of North Wales. The bailiffs apparently drew up a list of names of the burgesses lawful and fit to serve as jurors. About a week previous to the holding of the Leet, a precept was sent from the constable of the castle to the sergeants-at-mace, commanding them to summon the jury for the particular

[1] See *Min. Acc.* 1170/5, 13; 1171/3-7; 1180/1.
[2] *Hist. of English Law* (Pollock and Maitland), vol. i. p. 556.
[3] See *Parl. Papers*, 1835 (xxvi.), 1838 (xxv.).
[4] *Hist. of Aberconway* (R. Williams), p. 196.
[5] *Min. Acc.* 1170/16. [6] *Court Rolls*, 215/53.

court.[1] The jury sworn at the Michaelmas Leet served throughout the year.

The function of the Leet was of a comprehensive character, and included almost everything pertaining to the good government of the borough. We may look upon it as (1) an organ of executive and legislative government, and (2) as a court of justice.

Before proceeding with the judicial business of the court, matters dealing with the general administration of the borough were taken. The primary duty of the jurors was to find that all burgesses put in their appearance or made sufficient essoin, and to present defaulters for amercement. In this way the Leet, in conjunction with the system of frank-pledge, by which each burgess of a tithing became pledge for the actions of the other nine, performed the functions of the modern police. The system was supplemented by the popular clamour of hue and cry. Wrongful or false raising of the hue and cry was a matter of common presentment by the jury. It has been suggested that the jurors presented all raisings of the cry irrespective of their legality,[2] but the scanty evidence of the North Welsh borough leets does not support the view. The system of frank-pledge survived to a comparatively late date, though it became more and more nominal in character in proportion to the development of other judicial institutions. Concurrent with their presentment of the appearance or non-appearance of the burgesses, the jury made their declaration on the defensive *posse* of the borough.[3] Among other executive functions the Leet dealt with the routine business of the borough. New burgesses were sworn and enrolled, and henceforth took an active interest in the government of the borough.[4] Orders were also given to perambulate the borough boundaries, encroachments of all kinds presented, and any necessary repairs or other matters of communal interest reported upon.[5]

The legislative side of the Leet was apparently little developed in the North Welsh boroughs during the period of settlement. Legislative activity was to some extent forestalled by the general ordinances drawn up by the Conqueror for the govern-

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1835, vol. xxvi., *s.v.* Flint.
[2] *Leet Jurisdiction of Norwich* (W. Hudson), p. xxxv.
[3] See above, pp. 119-20.
[4] Cf. Merewether and Stephens, *Hist. of Boroughs, etc.*, p. xxi.
[5] *Court Rolls.* See above, P. B. Williams, *Hist. of Carnarvon*, p. 78.

ment of North Wales.[1] The common law system of municipal government is predominant, as was perhaps always the case in garrison boroughs, where the royal edict so often expressed the municipal will. We cannot point to any distinctive by-laws enacted by the North Welsh municipalities of an earlier date than the post-Union period. Yet what are we to make of presentments in the early court rolls, of offences 'against the ordinance of the King or Prince,' and 'against the ordinance of the town (*villæ*)'?[2] Is it a mere question of phraseology, or something more? Is the ordinance of the King or Prince one thing, the ordinance of the town another? In the one instance we could test, we found the ordinance of the town to be equivalent to the ordinance of the King.[3] Each borough apparently regarded the common ordinances of the Crown as being in some sense their own. But whether the North Welsh boroughs had any laws of their own creation, which they could specifically call their own before the late Tudor period, admits of little proof the one way or the other. The probability is decidedly a negative one.

The purely judicial side of the court was concerned with the presentment and punishment of offences committed within the borough. It embraced a wide area of criminal and correctional jurisdiction, including matters of personal, commercial, and communal import. Cases of theft, common assault, especially 'blood-drawing,' were frequently presented, and all common nuisances were brought up for remedy. The jury also exposed the sellers of unwholesome foods, and the users of false weights. They also enjoined the strict observance of the fixed ordinances of the assizes of bread and beer. Old offenders against these rules were subjected to the ordeals of the pillory and the tumbrel.[4]

The jurisdictional privileges accorded to the boroughs implied the privilege of gallows,[5] or the right to hang thieves taken within their liberties. That they exercised this in virtue of their privilege of infangenethef, is to some extent apparent from the topographical evidence of the mounds bordering some of

[1] *Rec. of Carn.* pp. 131-2.

[2] *Min. Acc.* 1170/3.

[3] *Court Rolls*, 215/54. David ap Ralph in mercy three pence because he housed (*hospitavit*) Dothegu, the daughter of Ieuan, *contra ordinacionem villae inde factam.* Edward I. included an ordinance to this effect amongst the general ordinances issued at the time of the conquest (*Rec. of Carn.*, p. 132).

[4] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 243-4.

[5] *Ib.* (*quo warranto* proceedings. See p. 123 above, n. 2).

the North Welsh boroughs. There were gallow-hills at Conway and Beaumaris.[1]

(ii) *The Small or Civil Court of the Borough.*—This court was held every three weeks (*de tribus septimanis ad tres septimanas*). Normally there would be seventeen such courts held yearly in each borough, but we sometimes find sixteen, fifteen, fourteen, thirteen, and sometimes none at all. The court differed from the Leet in that it had nothing to do with the government of the borough as such. Its jurisdiction was for the most part confined to civil suits; it did not extend, as in the case of the Leet, to minor criminalities and matters of police. The summary matters dealt with were those of trespass, common battery, wrongful levying of the hue and cry, and local slander.[2]

The Three Weeks' Court was presided over by the mayor and bailiffs. There was apparently no jury as in the Leet, though we have occasional entries in the proceedings of the Court Baron referring to convictions by 'adjudgment of the court.'[3] Is it the adjudgment of the mayor and bailiffs, or of a jury of burgesses? In a parallel account we find a burgess amerced six pence because he contradicted the finding of the jury.[4] On a court roll,[5] detailing the business of a civil court at Carnarvon 19th February 1321, it is said that one Thomas Baker was attached before the mayor and bailiffs for forestalling. Thomas acknowledged this, and put himself at the mercy[6] and grace of the *mayor and bailiffs*, who at the instance of two influential burgesses[7] pardoned him. This entry makes it fairly clear that the mayor and bailiffs constituted the magistracy in the civil court. The *p' jur'* in the record of the civil court above may possibly refer to a previous finding of the Leet jury.

(iii) *The Piepowder Court.*—This court was incident to the privilege of holding local markets and fairs. The grant of a local market and fair almost always implied the right of holding piepowder courts[8]; it is not often that we find the right expressly mentioned in the grant.[9] The courts were tenable

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1154/5 (Beaumaris), and *Rentals and Surveys* (Conway), 17/88.
[2] *Court Rolls*, as in notes 3 and 5 below.
[3] *Ib.*, 215/53, 54.
[4] *Min. Acc.* 1170/3.
[5] *Court Rolls*, 215/46.
[6] Cf. Peter's *Launceston*, p. 46.
[7] Cf. Hudson's *Norwich Leet and Jurisdiction*, Introduction, p. lii.
[8] Cf. Phillips' *Hist. of Cilgerran*, p. 48, and Williams' *Denbigh*, p. 124.
[9] For a Welsh instance see *Archaeologia*, vol. xlviii. p. 439 (a charter to Newport, Mon., *temp.* Richard II.).

on any market day[1] during the year. When held on the specific market and fair days they were termed the market and fair courts.

Such courts, as we know, treated urgent matters in dispute between buyers and sellers at the local mart. It was from this temporary and casual character of its jurisdiction that the court received its name. It was best symbolised by the dusty feet (*Curia de pede pulverizato*) of its suitors. Pleas of trespass, debt, and of broken covenants are amongst the commonest suit. We also find several North Welshmen amerced for the non-observance of the general ordinances that regulated the commercial activity of the Principality at this time, such as the carrying of arms to market, and the too premature transaction of business before the fair was openly proclaimed. Disobedience to the injunctions of the local bailiffs, and other matters to the contempt of our lord the King, made cause for additional amercements in the Court of Piepowder.[2]

The proceedings were probably taken in the local toll booth,[3] where the other issues of the market and fair were collected.[4] The bailiffs (and perhaps the mayor as in the other courts) formed the magistracy.[5]

(iv) *Ponderacio Panis*.—Two courts under this appellation were held at Carnarvon in the eighteenth year of Edward II., one 15th October 1324, and one 29th June 1325.[6] At these courts only breakers of the assize of bread were presented and amerced. This function was, of course, covered by the ordinary Court Leet. As far as can be seen, it was not usual to hold special courts for this purpose in the North Welsh boroughs.

The Court Leet, the Three Weeks' Court, and the Court of Piepowder were the three typical courts of the North Welsh

[1] The bailiffs of Conway, 1304-5, account for the pleas and perquisites of the Court of Piepowder for every day of the year (*Min. Acc.* 1170/3).

[2] *Court Rolls* (fair and piepowder proceedings, p. 126 above).

[3] *Min. Acc.* 1211/3 (*temp.* 4 Edward II.). Paid for the hire of a house outside the wall of the town of Carnarvon for collecting the lord Prince's toll and the pleas of the fair courts, 2s; also for the building of a *Tolbothe* outside the gate of the same town, 58s. 8d.

[4] The amount of the fair tolls are enumerated on some of the early *Court Rolls* (*e.g.* portf. 215/46, 53), and *Min. Acc.* 1154/4. Like the issues of the courts, they were evidently regarded as the profits of the legal fair.

[5] The bailiffs performed the duties of the clerk of the market. The right of holding piepowder courts was wrongly interpreted later to have been the magisterial right of the constable of the castle, by virtue of his ex-officio office of mayor of the borough (*Bye Gones*, 1880, p. 28).

[6] *Min. Acc.* 1170/16.

boroughs. The internal working of each is indifferently revealed by the scanty evidence of their proceedings. Beyond demonstrating the prevalence of the old system of pledging, and the system of compurgation by the aid of the oath-helpers, little insight is afforded into their legal economy. Who comprised the chief magistracy is fairly clear, as is the time at which the respective courts were held. Where the early courts were held, we have only surmised with the aid of later evidence.

On the question of court amercements the evidence is somewhat more instructive. They were assessed (as were the damages in cases of slander, etc.) by two officers called affeerers—*assessores* or *taxatores*. There is nothing to show how these were elected, but their services were requisitioned in all the borough courts. Corresponding officials appear in the county and hundred courts.[1] The amercements seldom exceeded twelve pence, a feature particularly prominent in boroughs derivable from the Hereford or Breteuil stock. There was a tendency to impose heavier amercements on foreign or out-suitors.[2] Refractory Welshmen disobeying the town bailiffs at the local fairs, and serious cases of blood-shedding, were generally amerced beyond twelve pence. The highest amercement recorded amounts to half a mark. One Meredith ap Llowarch is so amerced in a Michaelmas fair court at Carnarvon in 1326, because he carried arms in the King's fair there, on the feast of St. James, contrary to the decree of the local Justiciar.[3] There was always an obvious attempt on the part of the affeerers to fix the amercement in proportion to the presumed capacity of the offender to pay. One Ieuan, the shearman, was put in mercy three pence because he was a poor man.[4] Amercements were occasionally pardoned on the plea of poverty [4] and for other causes, such as absence on the King's service.[5]

The yearly issues of the borough courts varied considerably. They evidently added little or nothing to the prosperity of boroughs not held in farm or fee-farm to the burgesses. Up to, and during the reign of Edward III., the amounts arising from the pleas and perquisites of the non-fee-farm boroughs are given in detail on the bailiffs' account. After this date the issues were generally farmed or leased by the town communities for a number of years at a fixed yearly rent. The issues or profits

[1] *Court Rolls*, portf. 215/13. [2] See *Arch. Camb.*, IV. xiii. p. 310.
[3] *Court Rolls*, 215/47, m. 2. [4] *Ib.*, 215/46. [5] *Min. Acc.* 1170/16.

of the local markets and fairs were usually coupled with the court perquisites. A distinct estimate of the jurisdictional, as indeed of the commercial issues is not possible after this. In the fee-farm boroughs all particulars of the local revenue are unknown to us. We have two notable exceptions in the cases of the much decayed boroughs of Nevin and Pwllheli during the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV.

Taking first the non-fee-farm boroughs. Carnarvon began to farm the incidental profits arising from both their commercial and jurisdictional privileges in 1354, and continued to do so to the end of our period. The amount of the yearly farm was £6 during the years 1354 to 1361. At the latter date the farm was raised to £6. 13s. 4d., and remained at that figure to the end of Richard II.'s reign. Early in the reign of Henry IV. the same profits were arrented at £5, but by the eleventh year the farm had fallen to 40s. Two years later it rises again to 66s. 8d. During the reign of Henry V. the farm varies from 77s. to 70s. The first ten years of the reign of Henry VI. show a slight increase, the issues amounting to £4. From this point right down to the close of the reign of Henry VIII., £3. 0s. 4d. is the normal farm.[1]

Beaumaris farmed their perquisites and tolls several times during the reigns of Edward II. and III., and invariably did so after 33 Edward III. The amount of the farm fluctuated from a minimum of £5. 13s. 1½d. to a maximum of £6. 13s. 4d. in the time of Edward VI. Under Richard II. the farm was fixed at 100s. No returns are forthcoming for the troublous reign of Henry IV., but from Henry V.'s day to the seventeenth year of Henry VI. the amount of the farm is 70s. Thenceforward the farm remained at the stable sum of 75s.[2]

The detailed returns of the Newborough courts, excepting for the years 1304,[3] 1305,[3] 1409,[4] 1460,[5] are included in the general farm of the borough, and during our period the borough itself was often separated from the general administrative economy of North Wales. It formed parcel of the dower lands of the successive English queens.

The borough of Criccieth showed a desire to farm the profits of its courts and mart early in the reign of Edward II., but several detailed returns were made for a number of years previous to 27 Edward III. From this date to the close of the reign they

[1] *Min. Acc.* (*s.a.c.*). See Appendix below.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ib.*, 1170/3.
[4] *Ib.*, 1152/4.
[5] *Ib.*, 1154/4.

were farmed at a sum varying from 43s. 4d. to 50s. During the reign of Richard II., they were sometimes let to the community and sometimes to individual burgesses at a rent ranging from 100s. to 106s. 8d. Throughout the reign of Henry IV., a reign so fatal to its castle, Criccieth made no returns. The town remained in an impoverished condition until the eighth year of Henry V. Laurence Cok, a speculative burgess of Carnarvon, farmed the court issues this year for a sum of 40s. In the twenty-seventh year of Henry VI. the Three Weeks' Court realised 8s. and the Leet 5s. Ten years later what is known as the stewardship of the town is farmed at 27s. 4d. The accounts definitely state that there were no courts held during the years 8-13 Edward IV., but in the following year they are valued at 7s. 6d. Throughout the Tudor period the court perquisites, together with the local tolls, were farmed at 8s. per annum.[1]

Coming to the fee-farm boroughs, we may say that detailed returns[2] of the judicial profits at Conway are available for the eight years previous to the grant of its fee-farm charter. The pie-powder court was by far the most profitable. In 1305 the profits were 61s. In the accounts of 3 and 7 Edward II., piepowder and fair courts at Gannow are accounted for distinct from those of Conway. The fusion of the old borough of Gannow, founded by Henry III., into the new borough of Conway was a slow process.

The history of the court perquisites in the borough of Harlech is lost in its fee-farm of £22. Similar is the case of Bala, except for the three tourns held there by the sheriff of Merioneth. For the same reason nothing is known of the courts of Nevin (except during the years 8, 12, 13, and 14 Edward IV.)[3] and Pwllheli (except those of 27 Henry VI.).[4]

In view of the fact that the North Welsh burgesses farmed the issues of their courts, it is difficult to say with what regularity the boroughs kept and compiled their court rolls. That court rolls were compiled is evident from the indirect notices contained in the accounts and elsewhere.[5] As we have seen, there were some years during which no courts were held at all, and it would appear that the normal holding of the courts, of which the profits were inconsiderable, came ultimately to be regarded as more of a burden than a profit. Why no court rolls should

[1] *Min. Acc.* (*s.a.c.*). See Appendix below. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ib.*, 1181/1-5. [4] *Ib.*, 1179/1. *Perquisita Curiarum*=41s. 10d.
[5] E.g. *ib.*, 1154/4. Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1461-7, p. 382.

have survived for a date later than the year 1332 is not clear, except it be for the fact that the farming of the profits caused them to be stored away in the perfunctory local archives, and not in the local exchequer at Carnarvon as heretofore.[1] The surviving court rolls have apparently all come from the Old Treasury at Carnarvon.

The typical judicial organs of the mediæval borough—the Three Weeks' Court, the Court Leet, and the Court of Piepowder—continued in operation long after the Act of Union. They subsequently fell into disuse through (1) irregular holding on the part of the boroughs, and (2) through the gradual usurpation of their old functions by the new courts introduced by the Welsh judicial reforms of Henry VIII. The commission of the peace narrowed the purely judicial work of the old leets, and their administrative functions came to be performed by the new quarter sessions. The borough courts of Newborough were in entire disuse at the time of the Municipal Reform Commission. The Leet at Criccieth was only held once a year, and then merely for the purpose of electing officers. Similarly Nevin only held a Michaelmas Leet, and a civil court once a fortnight. There were apparently two leets at Pwllheli, but their old jurisdiction was confined. 'I have heard,' said one of the witnesses in his evidence before the commissioner, 'old people say that it was said that formerly the Leet tried prisoners for stealing and the like, just as they do now at the quarter sessions for the county.' The civil court at Beaumaris had not been held for nearly fifty years at the time of the commission. At Conway, however, it was held as usual every three weeks. Only one reference is made in the reports to the piepowder courts, and that to the effect that they were no longer practised in Beaumaris.[2] There was no great change in the constitution of the respective courts during the period intervening between the Act of Union and the Act for Reforming the Municipal Corporations of England and Wales. The one new feature is the appearance of borough recorders, who seem to have crept in during the process of adjustment required by the declining power of the Leet and the

[1] An endorsement on *Min. Acc.* 1170/3 points to the sending of court rolls and other accounts to the exchequer of Carnarvon. The history of their transfer during the last century also shows that the extant rolls were brought from here. Cf. *Arch. Camb.*, I. iii. p. 54 (no court rolls at Harlech, 1650).

[2] *Parl. Papers*, 1835 (vol. xxvi.); 1837 (vol. xxxv.).

election of borough constables. The stronger boroughs were able to keep in line with the new and more elaborate system of the county administration, and succeeded in preserving their identity. The weaker boroughs, through poverty and indifference, willingly allowed themselves to be absorbed by the new county jurisdictions. The Municipal Reform Act of 1835 gave a final blow to the distinctive traits of their mediævalism. But not to all in the same degree. Some survived as reformed corporations with distinctive though limited jurisdictions. Others assumed the rank of insignificant rural districts with no borough privileges.

(c) *The Boroughs in their Relation to the Judicial System of the North Welsh Principality*

In this connection we have to consider the relation of the burgesses to the extraordinary courts that were held in their boroughs during the Middle Ages. These extraordinary courts may be conveniently classified as follows :—

(1) *Courts held by the Justice of North Wales* or his deputies. —*Great and Petty Sessions.*

(2) *Courts held by the Sheriffs.*—(*a*) County court once monthly, and generally held in the county boroughs—Beaumaris, Carnarvon, and Harlech. (*b*) Great Tourn and View of Frank-pledge, half-yearly, in every commote or hundred; in some cases held in the boroughs.

(3) *Courts held by the Hundred or Commote Bailiffs.*—The Court Baron or Civil Court of the Commote, held every three weeks ; in some cases held in the boroughs.

The burgesses were amenable only to such of the above courts as were held by the justice of North Wales. They owed no suit to the ordinary county courts[1] of their respective shires, and as we have already seen, they possessed tourn and civil courts of their own. All matters beyond the jurisdiction of their ordinary courts, pertaining to the King's peace rather than to the peace of the borough, were brought directly before

[1] See above, pp. 122-3. Cf. Stubbs's *Constit. History* (Library Edition), vol. i. pp. 678, 681, as to the fullest county court before the itinerant justices, when each borough had to be represented by twelve burghers. The North Welsh boroughs, doubtless, were similarly represented before the justice of North Wales.

the justice in his sessions. The North Welsh sheriffs apparently interfered with the burgesses in their executive capacity only, and that in so far as concerned the pleas of the Crown. The *non-intromittat* clause of their original charters assured them this privilege.

The following notes, taken from the scattered evidence of the actual administration of justice in the three shires of North Wales up to the Act of Union, serve to show the relative importance of the North Welsh boroughs in the local judicature. Incidental advantages accrued to several of the boroughs through being the centre of one or more of the courts that were extraordinary to their own jurisdiction. The castellated boroughs, with their strong and commodious buildings, naturally outdistanced the manorial towns in judicial prestige, and the Statute of Rhuddlan particularly favoured one of the boroughs in this respect.

The so-called conquest of 1282 did not subject Wales to the supervision of the Superior Courts of Law at Westminster. This was the consummation of a much later date. The legal aphorism has it: 'Breve regis non currit in Walliam.' In North Wales the current writ was that of the King or Prince (as the case might be) of the local Principality.

The Statute of Rhuddlan established a separate and independent judicature in North Wales. It placed the administration of justice in the hands of the justice of Snowdon. The statute cited his charge to be the custody and government of the King's peace in Snowdon and the lands of Wales adjoining, a district incorporating the three newly formed shires of Anglesea, Carnarvon, and Merioneth.

Royal justice was administered pursuant to original writs issued under the King's seal (under the Prince's seal when there was one) of the Principality. This seal was in the custody of the local chamberlain at Carnarvon. The judicial writs, by which process to a suit already commenced by the original writ was executed, were issued under the justice's seal, which he kept in his own custody.[1]

The original writs were drawn up and sent out from the local chancery at Carnarvon. The concise form of many of these, with their necessary variations, are given in the text of the Statute of Rhuddlan. The activity of the chancery may be minutely gauged from the extant records we possess of the

[1] *Rot. Parl.*, i. p. 273.

yearly profits of the royal seal there—the *exitus sigilli* of the chamberlain's account. Petty writs were sealed at a fee of 6d. each, letters of protection, commission, and 'cokets' at 2s., and grants and confirmations of letters patent at 16s. 8d. each.[1] A roll of particulars was kept yearly, and preserved among the memoranda of the local exchequer.[2] The location of the central offices of the chancery and the exchequer at Carnarvon, and the consequent residence of the leading officials there, placed the borough of Carnarvon in the position of administrative and judicial capital of the Principality of North Wales, if not, indeed, of Wales, during the Middle Ages.[3]

The Statute of Rhuddlan throws very little light on the practical administration of justice. The date, place, and number of the courts were apparently left to the discretion of the justice. The statute, however, stipulated that assizes should be held twice, thrice, or four times a year, and also points to the necessity of a fifteen days' notice to tenants in pleas of *Mort d'ancestor*. It may be inferred from this that the justice held some kind of sessions, and that he went on a tourn or circuit of assize.[4] Supplementary evidence for the pre-Union epoch is decidedly scanty. We have only four plea rolls,[5] some scattered transcripts of odd pleadings,[6] and the incidental notices of the local exchequer accounts.[7]

It appears from these, that permanent Courts of Law were established at the chancery and exchequer of Carnarvon, where matters concerning the prerogative of the Crown and the royal revenue were despatched. We find in the accounts, issues of 'fines made before the chamberlain at Carnarvon' and 'fines made at the exchequer there.'[8] These headings seemingly

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. xxii. and 129. Cf. *Chamberlain Accts.* (North Wales Series) *passim.*

[2] Carnarvon was proverbial for its lawyers. Cf. Wynne's *Hist. of the Gwydir Family*, 1878, p. 72.

[3] Instances occur of royal orders being sent from London to Carmarthen via Carnarvon, but not, as far as I know, vice versa, e.g. *Min. Acc.* 1214/1, 3.

[4] Doddridge's *Ancient and Modern Estate, etc.*, p. 35. Cf. *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 208.

[5] *Plea Rolls*, Anglesea (No. 1), and Carnarvon (Nos. 1-3).

[6] Chiefly in the *Record of Carnarvon* and a *Miscellaneous Bk.* (No. 166) among the Augmentation Office Records. There are also two fragmentary documents for North Wales among the *County Placita* (*e.g.* Nos. 21 and 21*a*).

[7] *Q.R. Accts.* 109/2, 109/10, 111/1, 111/24, and the sheriff and chamberlain accounts. The latter merely give the court headings and the fiscal profits.

[8] *Chamberlain Accts. of North Wales* passim. 'Fines made before the auditor there' appears as a separate heading in some of the accounts.

point to the chancery and exchequer sides of the royal courts held at Carnarvon, in which the chamberlain and justice probably exercised a concurrent rather than a separate jurisdiction.[1] It was at the chancery court at Carnarvon that the North Welsh burgesses were ordered to exhibit their charters and make fine for further confirmations of their liberties,[2] and here they presented their petitions when seeking royal favour and the redress of certain grievances. The proceedings of the exchequer side show town bailiffs amerced for irregular presentment of their accounts at the yearly audit,[3] and the farming of the issues and perquisites of the boroughs to the town communities and others. In matters of a semi-judicial and administrative character the chamberlain and justice appear to be closely associated, but the justice himself held occasional pleas of the Crown at Carnarvon during the intervals between the customary sessions and tourns.[4]

Besides permanent and occasional courts at Carnarvon, the justice held sessions in each county twice a year. To these county sessions the borough bailiffs seem to refer in their returns of the 'fines and amercements' made before the justice at Michaelmas and Easter.[5] The sessions of Carnarvonshire were mostly held at Carnarvon, and occasionally at Conway; and those of the county of Anglesea in the borough of Beaumaris. The Merioneth sessions were held at Harlech, but some time before 18 Henry VIII. the sessions for this county were held at Carnarvon.[6] They were not restored to their native county until the Act 34-5 Henry VIII., when they were alternately fixed at Bala and Harlech.[7] The holding of the sessions was calculated

[1] See *Exchqr. Misc.* 7/11 (justice), 8/21 (chamberlain), for suits heard before them at the Carnarvon exchequer.

[2] *Rot. Parl.*, i. p. 373*a*; *Min. Acc.* 1170/2; *Exchqr. Q.R. Acc.* 109/10.

[3] *Min. Acc.* 1170/19; also *Exchqr. Q.R. Acc.* 109/10.

[4] On the plea roll of Carnarvon *temp.* Richard II. and Henry IV. the records of pleadings at Carnarvon appear side by side with those of the tourn and session courts.

[5] *Min. Acc.* (North Welsh towns) up to 16 Edward II. After this date the bailiffs cease to answer for these issues. They were evidently at this point included among the sheriff's farm of the respective counties.

[6] *Ib.*, 18-19 Henry VIII. (North Wales), No. 139, and *Plea Roll* (Carnarvon), No. 2. Cf. stat. 26 Henry VIII., c. 6. Late in the reign of Henry VII. the burgesses of Conway endeavoured to get the sessions of Carnarvon and Merioneth removed to Conway, the town being 'in decay' (Williams's *Aberconway*, pp. 49-50).

[7] *Plea Roll* (Merioneth), No. 1, contains a reference to courts held thus in 37 Henry VIII.

to add much to the prosperity of the borough in which it was held.[1] At a later date Harlech all but sacrificed the privileges of its fee-farm in order to obtain a monopoly of the great sessions.[2]

Next to the half-yearly sessions, we have the justice's *Iter* or tourn through the counties.[3] He sometimes went once, at other times twice, in the same year. The Statute of Rhuddlan had emphasised the importance of holding the assize twice, thrice, or even four times a year. The courts were held in the principal towns, mainly, of course, in the boroughs. The tourn courts or petty sessions of the four commotes of the castle district of Conway, were held generally at Conway, and sometimes at Trefriw or Gannow (Deganwy); those of Is and Uwchgwyrvai at Carnarvon; those of the commote of Eivionydd at Criccieth; and those of the district of Lleyn at Nevin and Pwllheli. The tourn courts at Carnarvon, Criccieth, Nevin, or Pwllheli were usually held on successive days.[4] One ostensible difference between the justice in sessions and the justice in tourn, was that no cases of oyer and terminer or gaol delivery[5] were taken. The tourn court was concerned chiefly with matters of the assize[6] and various personal pleas.

An early plea roll of the county of Carnarvon details the actual proceedings of many of these local courts during the reigns of Richard II. and Henry IV.[7] County sessions were held at Carnarvon by one Henry de Hokes, a deputy justice, during the Easter and Michaelmas terms of the year 1398. One tourn was made in the same year by Richard de Pykenvere, another deputy justice. Pykenvere called at Conway in May, and held courts at Criccieth, Nevin, and Carnarvon on successive days in June. The Easter sessions of the previous year were held at Carnarvon, an August session being held at Conway. One justice's tourn was made as above. The comparatively later plea rolls, of a date previous to the Act of Union, only give the proceedings of the county sessions.[8] The tourn is evidently

[1] Cf. *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 162, n. 1.

[2] *Arch. Camb.*, I. i. pp. 254-9; III. ii. p. 178; *Exchqr. Dep.*, Easter, 20 James I., No. 20.

[3] Referred to in the *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 208-10.

[4] *Carnarvon Plea Roll*, No. 1.

[5] Special commissioners were sometimes appointed for this purpose, e.g. *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1377-81, pp. 418, 422, 468.

[6] Details are given in the Statute of Rhuddlan.

[7] *Carnarvon Plea Roll*, No. 1.

[8] E.g. *Plea Rolls*, Anglesea, No. 1, and Carnarvon, Nos. 2 and 3.

dispensed with, its business being either performed in a supplementary session,[1] or by the new courts introduced by the commission of the peace.

The plea rolls of the pre-Union period contain several pleadings of burghal interest. We find town bailiffs sued for arrears of their borough profits, as well as for neglect of duty in aiding the sheriff to carry out the ends of justice.[2] Instances of the recovery of debts by burgesses from country folk buying merchandise in the local markets appear frequently,[3] as do pleas on the part of the rural populace for remedy against the tyranny and deception of the borough officials.[4] One interesting case of a plea of a broken term of apprenticeship appears between a burgess of Conway and a merchant of Beaumaris.[5] In the *quo warranto* proceedings before John de Delves *temp.* Edward III., it will be seen that in matters touching the commonalty the borough was represented by an attorney.[6]

Acts of conspiracy against the English boroughs on the part of the surrounding Welsh are sometimes met with. In one instance we get the details of a pleading moved by an English burgess against one and twenty Welshmen in a *placitum conspirationis*.[7] In these pleas between town and country, between English burgess and Welsh peasant, the constitution of the jury counted for much. It was, of course, the one special privilege of the English that no Welshmen should inquire of a cause in which they were involved. We have occasional petitions on behalf of the Welsh in which they begged a compromise. Such an one is the petition of a Welsh widow of Eivionydd, who, when summoned by an English burgess of Harlech to answer for debts incurred by her late husband, begged the Crown that the jury should be composed half of Englishmen and half of Welshmen.[8] The reply was: 'Let it be according to the custom of the country,' which would seem to imply that the jury should be entirely composed of Englishmen. The North Welsh were apparently not allowed to adjudge on English causes until

[1] In an account of 24 Henry VIII. the sheriff accounts for the issues of two great sessions and one petty session. The latter apparently corresponded to the Tourn courts of the justice (*Min. Acc.*, 23-4 Henry VIII. (North Wales), No. 96).

[2] E.g. *Plea Roll*, Carnarvon, No. 1, m. 25, 25*d*, 29*d*, 31, 36.

[3] *Ib.*, m. 24*d*.

[4] *Ib.*, m. 22.

[5] *Ib.*, No. 2.

[6] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 210.

[7] *Plea Roll*, Carnarvon, No. 1, m. 38.

[8] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 4439.

the grant of a remarkable charter by Henry VII. in 1507. One clause in this assured the above privilege to the Welsh, namely, the right to inquire concerning English persons, as English persons inquired and caused to be inquired of Welshmen.[1] This at once obliterated the significance of the privileged districts within which the English burgesses were warranted self-trial by their original charters. The burgesses, particularly those of the garrison boroughs of Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris, strongly opposed the grant.[2] Articles of injunction, nominally reinstating the burgesses in their old position, were issued by Henry VIII. in 1511[3]; but the Welshmen or 'foreign men' of the country practically never ceased to enjoy the privilege which they obtained in 1507. Several cases of affray, riots, etc., due to the affinity of the Welsh, are reported by the burgesses between this and the Act of Union, when racial consideration in matters of justice ceased to appear.[4] The old privileged districts of the mediæval burgesses would thus seem to have died a natural death. Just as they owed their origin to the jurisdictional privileges granted to English burgesses at the time of the conquest, so they owed their extinction to the jurisdictional privileges bestowed on the Welsh during the Tudor period.

In view of the political troubles and the lawless state of the country during the greater part of the Middle Ages, the arbitrary holding of courts[5] by the local justice or his deputy, left much to be desired in the matter of adequate administration of justice. The removal of the Merioneth sessions to Carnarvon must point to some make-shift arrangement, and complaints of excessive fees, with kindred acts of official tyranny, were common during the early Tudor period.[6] The judicial reforms of Henry VIII. put a stop to the most glaring of these abuses. Legal fees were fixed and made certain, and permanent courts were established. The new justices of the peace in their quarter sessions more adequately performed the functions of the old, irregularly held tourn, and the status of the old sessions, under

[1] *Patent Roll*, 22 Henry VII., p. 3, m. 2.
[2] See *Hist. of Aberconway*, p. 47.
[3] *Exchqr. Miscellanea*, No. 9/13.
[4] The Welsh become subjects of the realm.
[5] Cf. *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1339-41, p. 249. Sessions ordered to be held oftener.
[6] Several clauses of Henry VII.'s charter are especially concerned with the remedy of such irregularities.

the name 'Great Sessions,' was much improved. The local justice, too, now rid of the more burdensome duties of political defence, was more purely a judicial officer, with an increased stipend amounting to £50 yearly.[1]

Throughout the period, prisoners awaiting their trial in the local sessions were kept in the castle gaols under the custody of the constable.[2] By the Act 34 and 35 Henry VIII. prisoners were placed in the custody of the county sheriff. However, the castles, as heretofore, continued to be used as prisons until adequate county gaols were erected. The boroughs, too, continued to utilise their free prisons, but by the time of the reform of the municipal corporations, several had become amalgamated with or absorbed by the county prisons.

III. The Finance of the Borough

The finance of the North Welsh boroughs as revealed in the surviving accounts, is almost entirely of an extra-municipal interest. There are no private muniments that illustrate the financial organisation of the municipalities. The bailiffs' accounts merely picture the borough in its relation to the royal revenue of the Principality. They only afford occasional side-lights on the private or internal finance of the borough, and that at points where the Crown is directly concerned. The boroughs were in some respects the King's boroughs, in other respects the townsmen's boroughs. Some of their profits went to the royal treasury, some to the town chest. The same principle is illustrated above in the divided liability of the expenses of burghal defence—the Crown and the town contributing to the upkeep of the town walls and the local quays.

(i) *The Sources of Revenue.*—The royal revenue of the borough issued from the rents of the burgages and lands, the pleas and perquisites of the borough courts, the fines and amercements made by the burgesses before the local justice, the tolls proceeding from the local avenues of trade—the port, the market, and the fair, the rents and issues of the local mills, fisheries and ferries, and the profits incident to the Crown as lord paramount of the

[1] Stat. 34-5 Henry VIII., c. 26. Before this Act his stipend was £33. 6s. 8d. It was apparently fixed at this amount during the reign of Henry VII. The accounts ranging from Richard II. to Edward IV. show the justice's fee to be one hundred marks.

[2] See p. 124 above. The burgesses had the option of bail according to the laws of Breteuil.

town soil. In the case of fee-farm boroughs where the issues were farmed to the borough community at a fixed sum, as well as in those boroughs farming all or part of their profits, the superfluous issues over and above the amounts payable to the Crown went presumably into the common coffer of the borough.

The private income of the borough was apparently drawn from the following sources:—(1) the profits issuing from the jurisdictional and commercial privileges over and above the farms at which they were held of the Crown; (2) moneys received in virtue of the 'scot' liability taken by each burgess to contribute to the local burdens; (3) fines received upon the admission of burgesses [1]; (4) rents derived from lands leased of the town corporations; (5) special grants of money from the Crown for special purposes; (6) murage receipts. It is not until the middle of the sixteenth century that we can be absolutely certain that the town communities leased their lands; and the commercial profits issuing from local market and fair transactions practically ceased to be levied in the North Welsh boroughs after 22 Henry VII.

(ii) *Items of Borough Expenditure.*—We can be sure as to the payment of common fines for the confirmation of the borough charters, as of the occasional grants of town money in the way of lay subsidies. There was also the purchase of such municipal paraphernalia as was necessary for the administration of the borough. These would include the common seal for attesting the local leases, weights, etc. (weights and measures for the proper adjustment of trade), and common chests for the custody of the town muniments [2] and treasure. The expenses of works, as we have already seen, fell partly upon the town community. It is also true to say that the Crown provided some of the municipal paraphernalia during the Middle Ages. We find the burgesses of Conway debiting the costs of a new tumbrel [3] to the Crown, by deducting the money spent on its construction out of the royal issues of the borough. This, however, is the only instance that is found, and it is one which from the fact of its

[1] Cf. *Hist. of Aberconway* (Williams), pp. 97, 99.

[2] See *Arch. Camb.*, I. iii. p. 52. 'The Comone Cheste of the Towne of Harlech.'

[3] *Min. Acc.* 1170/4. Every borough or other liberty having view of frank-pledge possessed its tumbrel or ducking-stool for the punishment of scolds and unquiet women by ducking them in the water. A similar punishment was also inflicted upon defaulting bakers and brewers (cf. *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 243-4).

early date, may be an exceptional allowance on the part of the Crown. The town communities when farming the local mills or ferries usually took on the responsibility of repair. When not so stipulated, the bailiffs deducted the cost of any necessary repairs executed, out of the royal issues of their borough.[1] It cannot be definitely determined whether any of the borough officers were remunerated for their duties[2]; we find several of the royal officers, as the constable and porter, paid directly (sometimes) by the town bailiffs, who debit the same in their account. Again, the porters[3] of Carnarvon as early as 1331 are described as being bearers of the mace. Who bought the mace? Was it the Town or the Crown?

(iii) *Collection and Disbursement of the Borough Revenue*

(*a*) *Royal Revenue.*—Surveys, giving particulars of the royal profits of each borough, were carefully preserved in the local exchequer at Carnarvon.[4] Any changes in the value and term of different farms were enrolled on the memoranda rolls of the local exchequer.[5] The estimated income derivable from each borough was thus known to the local chamberlain. The same rolls, too, were referred to by the royal auditors who were annually commissioned to audit the accounts. The town bailiffs presented their yearly accounts at the exchequer of Carnarvon.[6] Issues in abeyance through abnormal circumstances, such as scarcity of hirers, or political revolts, were respited, and the rents of lands and houses previously farmed, which had become decayed in the meantime through destruction or want of repairs, were held to be 'in decay.' For what

[1] E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1170/3, 5.

[2] See *Parl. Papers*, 1837-8, vol. xxxv., *s.n.* Rhuddlan. The bailiffs receive a small portion of the court dues.

[3] *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1330-4), p. 164; (1334-8), p. 96.

[4] *Min. Acc.* 1211/2, 3, 1216/2.

[5] See above, p. 93.

[6] *N.B.*—In cases where the borough was leased by the Crown to a fermor for life or a term of years, the lessee, of course, not the bailiffs, answers at the local exchequer. When the boroughs were much decayed and incapable of rendering their ordinary rents, the Crown frequently delegated its administration to the hands of an approver (*appruator*), a kind of royal bailiff, who realised what he could for the profit of the Crown. This was sometimes done with one or more of the sources of royal revenue in the borough. In the cases of Newborough, Bala, Harlech, and Conway the issues were at times during our period entirely separated from the fiscal machinery of the local Principality. In such instances special receivers were appointed by the persons so entitled, and the local bailiffs presented their accounts to the minor exchequers temporarily established at Harlech and Conway.

remained over after the deduction of the 'respite' and 'decay' rents the bailiffs were responsible (*Et debent*, etc.). When not paid before the presentment of the next account, these were generally carried on as the *arreragia* in the account of the following year. Though arrears accumulated for a series of years, and appear in one round sum in subsequent accounts, the liability of each year's arrears rested with the two bailiffs that were first charged with it.[1] We often find the 'respite' and 'decay' rents carried on among the arrears, and automatically deducted each year. When the charge and discharge actually balance, the bailiffs are either said to be 'quit,' or the sides of the account are said to be 'equal.' The bailiffs paid money into the exchequer at different times during the year,[2] receiving tallies or indented bills as receipts. The porterage of the royal money from Carnarvon to the royal exchequer at Westminster, was entrusted to the auditor or any other person of repute, appointed by the local chamberlain or the Crown.[3]

(*b*) *Private Revenue.*—Of the collection and disbursement of the private as opposed to the royal revenue of the borough comparatively little is known. We find, moreover, that there was a common coffer kept at Conway in the reign of Henry VIII., and that the bailiffs had to render account in the common house of the borough before the comburgesses, as to how they had spent the common revenues.[4] This scrutiny on the part of the borough communities as to the method in which their money was spent, as of the security with which it was kept, must have been a common feature in the burghal life of the North Welsh boroughs. The common coffer of Conway was kept in the church.[5]

The Crown, as we should expect, never taxed the North Welsh garrison boroughs with contributions in the way of tallages and subsidies during the Middle Ages. When the Black Prince sought an aid of the burgesses of Conway in 1343, they replied by quoting an ordinance of Edward I., to the effect that they were the appointed 'garnishers' (*garnesturi*) of the town of Conway, and that nothing more was asked of them. The privilege of *gaywite*, included in their original charters, nominally

[1] The names of the bailiffs for as many as nine years are sometimes appended to the bailiffs' account, with the respective amounts of their outstanding debts.

[2] *E.g.* 1170/7 (eight tallies).

[3] *Chamberlain Accts.* (North Wales), *passim.*

[4] *Hist. of Aberconway* (R. Williams), pp. 97, 99, 196.

[5] *Conway Registers* (A. Hadley), p. xi.

exempted them from moneys given to war, on condition that they guarded the lands adjoining their boroughs.[1] Moreover, two years later, the burgesses of the English vills of Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris, granted a voluntary aid of £25 to Edward III. for the purpose of assisting him in his French wars.[2] The document is silent as to how this sum was assessed. The vills of Nevin and Pwllheli (before their enfranchisement)[3] contributed to a fifteenth levied on all movables by Edward I. Several returns relating to subsidy moneys collected during the later years of the reign of Henry VIII., show that separate petty collectors were usually appointed for the boroughs of Carnarvon and Conway. The rest were generally included in the returns of the hundred in which they were situate.[4] In the returns made to the order for grants of money 'of the devotion of the people' against the Turks, November, 35 Henry VIII., the boroughs are included in their respective parishes. The money was assessed and collected according to instructions sent by the Bishop of Bangor to the commissaries of the respective deaneries, and the wardens of the several parishes. The parish of Conway contributed 5s. to this particular grant, Criccieth 2s. 8d., Nevin 2s. 6½d., Llanbeblig 4s. 8d.,[5] Beaumaris 14s. 4d., and St. Katherine's parish 14d.[6] To a benevolence granted in May of the next year the borough of Carnarvon contributed £14. 2s. 4d.,[7] Beaumaris £4. 5s., and Newborough 2s.[8]

IV. The Officers of the Borough

(i) *The Constable of the Castle.*—The nominal duties associated with the constableships of Welsh castles to-day are apt to belittle our notion of the importance and significance of the office of constable in the Principality during the Middle Ages. In the administrative machinery of North Wales during the period 1284-1536, the constable of the castle ranked next in importance to the local justice and chamberlain.

The constable was invariably elected either by the English sovereign or the Prince of Wales for the time being. Appointments made by the English kings were usually enrolled on the patent or close rolls; those of the English Princes of Wales

[1] *Orig. Docts.* (*Arch. Camb.*, suppl. vol. 1877), p. cli.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1214/3.
[3] *Lay Subsidy* (P.R.O.) 242/50.
[4] *Lay Subsidies*, 220/135-6, 220/153.
[5] *Ib.*, 220/134.
[6] *Ib.*, 219/1. See above, p. 52.
[7] *Ib.*, 220/133.
[8] *Ib.*, 219/5.

were by letters patent under the seal of the Principality, and were enrolled on the memoranda rolls of the local exchequer at Carnarvon. The latter rolls are mostly lost, but a few of these grants are preserved among the *inspeximus'* of later sovereigns.[1] The letters of appointment were generally followed by a mandate in pursuance, either to the previous keeper to deliver up his custody, or to the local justiciar to place the nominee in possession of his office. Notice of the appointment, and particulars as to the amount and payment of the constable's salary, were also directed to the local chamberlain.[2]

The constables chosen were for the most part tried men. The importance of the office called for capable and experienced men, and the comparatively lucrative emoluments connected therewith were a matter of some weight with the Crown when a debtor or other person to whom the Crown owed an obligation happened to be one of the prospective candidates. Constables received their grants of office on the recommendation either of the King or of his council in return for good service rendered. The constableship was often bestowed as a mark of further favour, and sometimes in mitigation of some acknowledged indebtedness on the part of the Crown. Mediæval Wales, with its constableships, sheriffdoms, rhaglotries, rhingildries, woodwardships, and other minor offices connected with its complex administration, was a particularly useful field for this purpose. The later Plantagenets made frequent use of the farms and issues of the Principality of North Wales, in relieving themselves of personal debts incurred by the continued strain of the Scottish and French campaigns. The English sovereigns, surrounded by a host of court parasites and ambitious friends, all eager for the emoluments of office, sometimes made duplicate grants of the same office.[3]

We also find constables elected through official and family commendation. A constable, leaving his charge through special circumstances, occasionally recommended a suitable person to be his successor. The case of one Gilbert de Elsefeld affords an interesting example of this nomination system. He was appointed constable of Beaumaris in 1328 through the

[1] E.g. *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1377-81), pp. 153, 230; (1388-92), p. 419; (1422-9), pp. 11, 15, 54.
[2] *Ib.* (1317-21), p. 593; (1330-4), p. 343; (1334-8), p. 497.
[3] *Ib.*, 1330-4, p. 479.

influence of the notorious Roger de Mortimer (d. 1330). The grant was revoked in 1333, apparently on the score of the latter's rebellious conduct. The letters are said to have been procured for Gilbert at the instance of Mortimer, who had brought the King's affairs to ruin and disgrace.[1]

The silent workings of family interests are to be found in the case of constables retiring through old age and failing sight. On the voluntary surrender of their letters patent, they usually solicited a regrant of the office to members of their family. The result of this practice was that the office of constable became more or less hereditary in one family. Such was the case with the Stanleys at Carnarvon during the fifteenth century, and with the Bulkeleys at Beaumaris during the Tudor period and later. Hereditary constables are more prominent from the time of Henry VII. onwards.[2] By this period the office had lost the gravity which pertained to it during the Middle Ages, and was, in fact, little more than a mark of personal honour and family prestige.

Owing to the important function of the mediæval castle in the political government of the Principality, the constable was almost invariably an Englishman.[3] 'Offices of charge' were legally forbidden to the Welshmen. A Welshman was once appointed constable, but he only held office for a week.[4] The statutory enactments of the House of Lancaster prolonged and intensified this racial qualification. In subsequent grants the usual words 'or by his sufficient deputy' are supplemented by the formula 'or by his sufficient English deputy, and not Welsh.'[5] It is not until the early Tudor period that the native baronage, through intermarriage and other anglicising influences, had its representatives in any force and sequence.

[1] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, p. 465. Cf. *Dictionary Nat. Biog., s.n.* Mortimer wielded considerable power in Wales.

[2] See list of constables in Breeze's *Kalendars of Gwynedd.*

[3] See *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1324-7, p. 215, for the only known instance of the appointment of a woman.

[4] *Ib.*, 1381-5, p. 100. Appointment of Gronw ap Tudor, 18th March 1382, to be constable of Beaumaris. He was accidentally drowned the following Sunday, 23rd March. Baldwin Radington succeeded him in the constableship, 25th March 1382 (C. Ashton, *Gweithiau Iolo Goch*, pp. 291-2). David Cradoc was nominally constable of Beaumaris before Gronw ap Tudor (Breeze, *Kalendars of Gwynedd*, p. 121). The only other Welsh name among the constable lists compiled by Breeze (before the Act of Union) is that of Davydd ap Ieuan ap Eignon, the gallant defender of Harlech for Henry VI.

[5] *Min. Acc.* 1179/1, 1216/7, 1217/1.

Excepting Criccieth, the constableship of which was discontinued shortly after the destruction of the castle by Glyndwr,[1] constables were regularly appointed in the remaining castles throughout our period. As a rule, they were elected for term of life. The formality of granting the constableship of a castle during pleasure, or during good behaviour, was sometimes preliminary to a larger and subsequent grant for life. This was to be construed as a mark of further favour. The custom was sometimes overdone. William Trussel, a king's yeoman, was appointed (18th November 1333) to the custody of the castle of Beaumaris *for life*. In the September of the next year he received a similar grant of the same office for term of life, which purported to be an enlargement of the previous grant.[2]

The constable, as we have already seen, was privileged to hold his office by a sufficient deputy. When absent on the King's service, or disabled through illness [3] or other circumstances, he was allowed to render his account, and perform other duties pertaining to the office by attorney.[4] Personal custody, however, was strongly insisted upon in cases of prime urgency. A threatening tone, with suggestions of dismissal in case of neglect, is given to the royal mandates despatched to the local constables during the abnormal periods of political unrest.[5] The sinister designs of the King's enemies in Scotland and France were a sufficient pretext for enjoining personal custody.[6] And the personal residence of the constable was particularly needed when rumours of a native rebellion became something more than the common talk of the neighbourhood.[7] For the neglectful custody of Conway castle during the opening raids of Glyndwr's insur-

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1216/7, *temp.* 28 Henry VI. The chamberlain, referring to the castle of Criccieth, says: 'The castle was totally destroyed at the time of the Welsh rebellion, and so remains to-day.' One Edward Grymeston and Taket Blondel pray for the arrears of the fee of the constableship of Criccieth, to which they were appointed 7th October, 25 Henry VI. This is the only intimation we have of the nominal survival of the constableship. Cf. *ib.*, 1216/8, where a reference is made to Roger Acton, the constable (next preceding the above) of the time of Henry IV.

[2] *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1330-4), p. 480; (1334-8), p. 13. Trussel acted as constable from the later date. No reference is made to the earlier letters in the *quo warranto* proceedings brought against him at the instance of the Black Prince in 1353 (*Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 181-3).

[3] *Arch. Camb.*, III. xiv. p. 161.

[4] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1327-30, p. 184.

[5] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1399-1401, p. 469.

[6] *D.K. Report*, xxxvi., appendix ii., p. 99.

[7] E.g. *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1313-18, p. 267.

rection, John Mascy, the constable, was declared an outlaw. He was, however, pardoned after the castle had been recovered.[1]

The average fee of the respective constables of the North Welsh castles during the period when permanent garrisons were stationed in the castles was a hundred marks per annum. Out of this the constables paid the wages of the soldiery. From the close of the reign of Edward III., when temporary garrisons begin to be maintained directly at the royal expense, the constable fees of Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris were respectively fixed at £40 a year, and those of Harlech and Criccieth at twenty marks each. The constables of Carnarvon and Conway continue to take £40 yearly, together with £12. 13s. 4d. for the custody of their respective boroughs, until 20 Henry VII. After this, the constable of Carnarvon takes £60 in respect of both offices, and the constable of Conway £50. The constableship of Beaumaris, with the captaincy of the town, produced fees of £40 and £12. 13s. 4d. respectively up to the tenth year of Henry VII., when they were nominally amalgamated into a reduced fee of forty marks. The remuneration of Harlech's constable was doubled during the reign of Henry V., and was further increased to £50 by Henry VII.[2] Other profits incident to the constableship fell to the constable as keeper of the castle gaol.

The local constables were paid their fees by the chamberlain of the exchequer of Carnarvon out of the general issues of the Principality of North Wales.[3] The constable of Conway, however, at a later date received the emoluments of his office from the town bailiffs out of the issues of the local borough.[4] Several petitions in the patent and close rolls show the fees of the constables to be often in arrears.[5] English sovereigns had perforce to postpone payment at times, as for instance Edward III. in 1342, when he was hard pressed by his debts to divers creditors in parts beyond the sea.[6] Constables paid their own deputies, but on the death of a constable, the Crown generally appointed a *custos* during vacancy at a stipend of four pence a day.[7]

[1] Wylie, *Hist. of Henry IV.*, i. pp. 215-16.
[2] *Min. Acc.* (chamberlain of North Wales), Edward I. to Henry VIII., for constable fees.
[3] See *Cal. Close Rolls* passim, *e.g.* 1327-30, p. 279.
[4] *Min. Acc.* 1179/1. Cf. 1170/4 for an early instance of this.
[5] E.g. *Cal. Close Rolls* (1333-7), p. 168; (1339-41), p. 286.
[6] *Ib.* 1341-3, p. 326.
[7] E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1212/3, 4, 7, and 1216/3; *Acts of Privy Council* (ed. Nicolas), ii. p. 238.

The duties of the constable of a North Welsh castle during the period 1284-1536 were somewhat complex. He was the administrative governor of both (1) the castle and of (2) the fortified borough; (3) the *custos* of the castle gaol; (4) the ex-officio mayor of the borough; and (5) occasionally performed other administrative duties of an extraordinary character.

(1) *Governor of the Castle.*—As administrative governor of the castle he acted (1) as head of the military garrison, and (2) as general supervisor of the castle economy. Being chief of the garrison he was responsible for its military efficiency. He had to keep the castle constantly garrisoned with the complement of soldiers necessary to maintain the security of the English interest in North Wales.[1] He was also particularly charged to be attendant to the mandates of the Crown touching matters of national defence, either directly[2] from the King, or indirectly through the local justiciar and chamberlain. Only two constables' accounts are at present (1906) available for North Wales. They throw considerable light upon the number and character of the castle garrison, and note minutely the changes that took place in the personnel of the garrison during the period accounted for.

As general supervisor of the castle economy, all goods of the castle, armour, victuals, etc., were put in the constable's custody.[3] He attached his seal to indentures upon their receipt, and his leave was necessary in case of their removal.[4] He, too, occasionally supervised the accounts of the castle works,[5] and is more than once found concerned with the direct victualling of the castle.[6] Subsidiary duties such as these more rightly belonged to the local justiciar and chamberlain, and other members of the castle staff, specially appointed for this purpose.[7] The constables did not, at all times, willingly submit their castles to the care and scrutiny of the justiciar and chamberlain.[8]

(2) *Governor of the Fortified Borough.*—The custody of the borough like that of the castle was vested in the constable. His status as military governor was further assured (1) by the fact that he was *ipso facto* mayor of the borough, and, as we

[1] E.g. *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1313-18, p. 392.
[2] *Exchqr. Mis.* 9/13.
[3] *Cal. Pat.* and *Close Rolls* passim; *Exchqr. T. of R. Bk.*, No. 144, f. 87.
[4] *Cal. Close Rolls* (1313-18), p. 294; (1323-7), pp. 3-4.
[5] *Min. Acc.* 1211/7, 9; *Q.R. Acc.* 13/32 (Beaumaris).
[6] *Min. Acc.* 1214/11; *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 224.
[7] See above, pp. 113-14.
[8] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1337-9, p. 91.

have already seen, (2) by the later amalgamation of the castle constableship and the town captaincy. The office of captain implied the government and supervision of all town gates, all hospices (*hospitae*) and houses placed upon all gates, over or under the town walls, together with the supervision of all soldiers therein.[1] The captaincy was a purely military office. Some writers,[2] arguing from the fact that the offices of constable and captain were sometimes held by different persons, have concluded that the latter was the mayor of the borough. But it is clear that the office of captaincy in no way affected the position of the constable as ex-officio mayor of the borough.

The constable would naturally be the leader of the municipal army in time of war, but there is nothing to show that this formed part of his function as (*qua*) constable.[3] It was in the name of the King, rather than in the name of the borough, that the North Welsh burgesses took up arms before the Act of Union. The military individuality of the civic boroughs is veiled by the fact that they were political units in a system of defence.

(3) *Keeper of the Castle Gaol.*—It was from this source that what are called the profits of the constableship [4] apparently sprang. The castles contained the recognised royal prisons of the time. A small fee, perhaps five pence,[5] was payable to the constable in respect of every prisoner. Each constable was seemingly charged with the custody of prisoners drawn from his own castle district, a charge which was ultimately made conterminous with the county, and vested in the hands of the sheriff.[6] In addition to the ordinary prisoners incidental to the local administration of justice, the constable was often called upon to undertake the custody of prisoners of war, heretics, and local rebels. A large number of Welsh rebels, English Lollards,[7] and prisoners of war from France and Scotland,[8]

[1] It is defined thus in *Min. Acc.* 1216-7.

[2] See *Parl. Papers*, 1835, vol. xxvi., *s.n.* Beaumaris. Cf. S. Lewis, *Topog. Dict. of Wales, s.n.c.*

[3] Cf. J. Brassart, *Hist., etc., de Douai*, p. 14.

[4] Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1422-9, p. 56. The custody was implied in the grant of the constableship (*Rec. of Carn.*, p. 142).

[5] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 141. Four pence paid to the constable and a penny to the janitor. Cf. *ib.*, p. 182, where the constable received five pence in some cases.

[6] Stat. 34-5 Henry VIII., c. 26, ss. 26, 27.

[7] 1215/7 (thirteen Lollards at Beaumaris. There were some more at Cardigan). Cf. p. 246 below.

[8] *Cal. Close Rolls* (1307-13), p. 207; (1323-7), pp. 3, 450; *Min. Acc.* 1211/2, 9; 1212/2, 3, 5, 10 (Scottish); 1216/3 (French, *temp.* Henry v.).

were safely lodged in the North Welsh castles, at frequent intervals during the mediæval period. The wages of the prisoners of war, three pence *per diem*, which they received at the hands of the constable, were debited to the royal account by the local chamberlain.

Prisoners were kept at Criccieth as late as 22 Richard II.[1] The other castles served as prisons far into the Tudor period and later. References to prisoners in the castle gaols appear promiscuously in the patent rolls,[2] the majority of instances being the records of pardons obtained for homicides committed in self-defence. In the event of the avoidable escape of prisoners the constables were subjected to heavy fines. John de Sapy, constable of Beaumaris, 13 Edward II., was fined £15 for the escape of one Ieuan Cwtta and his comrade.[3] Thomas Heiton, constable of Carnarvon, for the voluntary release of a prisoner in his custody, 20 Henry VII., was punished by a fine of £50.[4] We also find castle porters (who as subsidiary officers of the castle were to some extent responsible) heavily mulcted for the escape of prisoners.[5]

The constable had apparently nothing to do with the custody of the town prison. This was seemingly placed in the hands of a responsible townsman. An entry in the patent roll for 1313 gives the pardon of William de Chalouns, a burgess of Conway, for the escape of one John de Doncastre, a prisoner detained for divers felonies, out of the prison of the town of Conway.[6] William de Chalouns was not the constable of the castle, but six years previously he had acted in the capacity of one of the borough bailiffs. Evidently the boroughs had their independent *custodes prisonæ*.[7]

(4) *Mayor of the Borough* (*ex-officio*).—The original charters of the five castellated boroughs of North Wales direct that the constable of the castle shall be mayor of the borough. This was generally the rule in cases where the castles were situated within the limits of the adjoining boroughs. Other Welsh instances are Hope, Flint, Rhuddlan, Cowbridge, Kenfig, and

[1] *Plea Roll* (Carnarvon), No. 1, m. 35.
[2] E.g. *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (1307-13), p. 158; (1313-17), pp. 388, 456, 652.
[3] *Min. Acc.* 1212/2. Cf. *ib.*, 1174/1, and *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1327-30, p. 124.
[4] *Exchqr. Miscell.* 9/19.
[5] *Min. Acc.* 1171/8; *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 224.
[6] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1307-13, p. 525.
[7] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 181, and other *quo warranto* proceedings relating to the boroughs of North Wales there printed.

Llantrisant. In all these boroughs the constable performed the duties of the civic mayor (for which see below under s. (ii) Mayor of the Borough).

It may be doubted whether this ex-officio mayor of the castle borough stood in the same relation to the community as did the popularly elected mayor to the community of the manorial borough. The ex-officio mayors of the castellated boroughs were in a sense royal mayors paid by the Crown. They were not drawn from the townsmen as in the manorial boroughs. We find the justice of North Wales appointing one William de Fennes to exercise the office of mayor in the town of Conway, because of the disobedience of those who kept the town there. William acted as mayor for a few months in 1313 at a stipend of ten pence per day.[1] The contrast between the position of the *ex-officio* and popular mayors is not very marked during the Middle Ages, but the reign of Henry VIII. would seem to mark a definite limitation of the civic function of the constable of the castle. The change of political atmosphere made his presence unnecessary, and the prominence given to the notion of 'incorporation' encouraged the town communities to rid themselves of all external control. It is a moot point whether the ex-officio mayor ever formed an integral part of the corporate body.[2] At Conway and Beaumaris from the late Tudor period onwards, the civic functions of the constables were confined to formal visits to the towns on charter day to take the oaths of the officers, and the taking of the president's chair at the parliamentary elections.[3] Even as early as 1570 the burgesses of Conway elected their alderman as chief magistrate of the borough. They seem to have ousted the constable from the enjoyment of this right on the strange plea that the constable must be sworn by the burgesses before he is mayor. The foundation charter justified no such proceeding. The burgesses continued to do this until 1830, when the constable was restored to his old position as ex-officio mayor. The right was finally resigned by Richard Bulkeley to one William Hughes, who acted as the first modern mayor of Conway about the year 1878.[4] The burgesses of

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1211/5.

[2] At Cowbridge the mayor was not an integral part of the corporation (*Parl. Papers*, 1880, vol. xxxi.).

[3] *Ib.*, 1835, vol. xxvi.

[4] *Hist. of Aberconway* (Williams), pp. 92-6; *Cambrian Remembrancer*, p. 27; J. Bayne, *Tourist Guide to Conway*, p. 74.

Beaumaris were empowered to elect a mayor by the governing charter of 4 Elizabeth. He was elected by the council of the close corporation that was then formed. Nevertheless, the constable of Beaumaris castle continued to exercise his nominal duties,[1] but he was not an integral part of the corporation as such. At Harlech [2] and Carnarvon the constables seem to have exercised their old civic duties right down to the Reform Act of 1832.[3] The constable of Carnarvon voluntarily resigned his mayoral rights to the corporation in 1838. The mayoralty of the town of Criccieth, where the constableship ceased early in the fifteenth century, became hereditarily attached to the owners of Ystym Cegid, a farm about a mile from the town. The family claimed some genealogical connections with some of the early constables.[4]

(5) *Extraordinary Duties of the Constable.*—In addition to the ordinary duties attached to their constableship, the North Welsh constables were frequently requisitioned to perform other behests. Some of these were the supervision or collection of a local subsidy, the executing of a commission of array,[5] and the conduct of an inquiry [6] into any local matters wherein the Crown was concerned. At the outset, the administrative function of the constable was liable to be confounded with that of the sheriff on the one hand, and with that of the town bailiffs on the other. We find some of the early constables busying themselves with the repairs of royal manors adjoining their castles,[7] and the constable of Conway once charged himself with the tolls of the local fair.[8] This latter duty, however, pertained to the constableship of some mediæval castles.[9]

The constableship of the North Welsh castles, it may be observed, was a purely administrative one. No disputed jurisdiction complicates its history. There were no courts held at the door of the castle. The lordship of the castle included no tenants of the castle as such. The North Welsh constableships have nothing of the feudal character which may be detected in

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1835, vol. xxvi.
[2] *Arch. Camb.*, I. i. pp. 265, 267; iii. p. 54.
[3] *Old Karnarvon* (W. H. Jones), p. 136.
[4] *Parl. Papers*, 1835, vol. xxvi.
[5] E.g. *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1279-88, p. 505; *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1292-1301, p. 343.
[6] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13,991; *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1292-1301, p. 165.
[7] *Min. Acc.* 1211/2, 9.
[8] *Court Rolls*, 215/48.
[9] E.g. *Exchqr. Q.R. Accts.* 23/10 (Dover); 22/40 (Roxburgh).

the constableships of the Marcher castles that were founded at an earlier date. True, the castles of Conway and Harlech possessed small tracts of adjoining land,[1] and true also there were castle demesnes at Beaumaris[2] for a short time until they were absorbed by the burgesses, but the lordship of the castle of Beaumaris or of any other North Welsh castle, was something very different from, say, the lordship of the castle of Builth.[3]

(ii) *The Mayor of the Borough.*—With the exception of Newborough, the burgesses of the manorial boroughs elected a mayor out of their own number at Michaelmas in each year. The Black Prince ultimately conceded the same privilege to the burgesses of Newborough.[4]

Until the acquisition of this charter, the steward of the commote of Meney was ex-officio mayor of the borough.[5] This arrangement is interesting as being the only instance in the Principality of North Wales, where the government of a borough was subjected to the control of the officer of the local hundred.

In the English towns of Northern France, it was the general rule for the mayor to be elected by the seneschal of the local hundred, out of a number of burgesses selected by the town community. The practice is said to be derived from the celebrated establishments of Rouen,[6] the codex of customs that was generally adopted by towns of the *ville anglaise* type.[7] We have excellent parallels of a similar practice in the borough

[1] *Orig. Docts.* (*Arch. Camb.*, suppl. vol., 1877), pp. clxvi., clxxi.

[2] Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1307-13, p. 102. A writ *de intendendo* is directed to the *tenants of the castle*. The constable accounts for the rents of the castle demesne up to 1399. See above, p. 51.

[3] *Ib.*, 1313-17, pp. 322-3, 325.

[4] *Exchqr. T. of R. Misc. Bk.*, 144, f. 144*b*.

[5] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 177. The burgesses previously petitioned that the constable of Beaumaris should act as mayor of their borough. In reply Edward II., then Prince of Wales, ordained that the constable of Carnarvon for the time being should be their mayor, with a proviso that he should appoint a deputy in case the duties were too onerous. This request on the part of the burgesses is due perhaps to the fact that they were affiliated to Rhuddlan, a castellated borough (*ib.*, p. 218).

[6] *Les établissements de Rouen* (A. Giry, Paris, 1883). M. Giry in this work gives a detailed account of the 'establishments,' their origin, source, character, propagation, influence, and history. The *communes* studied are for the most part those founded by English sovereigns in France. The type of the Anglo-French commune is well presented. The extension of some of its institutional traits to British municipalities is perhaps worth seeking for. The Welsh instances mentioned below afford some striking parallels.

[7] *Histoire Critique du Pouvoir Municipal* (C. Leber, 1828), pp. 386-7.

of Overton[1] in the Marches of North Wales, and also in the borough of Neath[2] in South Wales. It has also been remarked (upon what evidence is not noted) that this eclectic policy was prevalent in the towns of the districts of Arwystli and Cyveiliog in Upper Montgomeryshire.[3]

Apparently mayors were regularly elected in the manorial boroughs during the Middle Ages. At Nevin and Pwllheli, where the local conditions never perhaps favoured an elaborate municipal administration, the office became the monopoly of local magnates. Though Newborough nominally surrendered its charter, 15 Henry VIII., the burgesses elected a mayor as late as 1811. The mayoralty of Bala was extinguished early in the nincteenth century, and then presumably through some religious dispute.

Upon election, the mayor both of the castle and of the manorial borough took a twofold oath. Firstly, to the King, to preserve all rights of the Crown; and secondly, to the burgesses, to preserve all liberties conceded them by the Crown, and to perform faithfully all that pertained to the office of mayor in the borough. There is no evidence to show whether the ex-officio mayor took this same oath yearly, or only at the time of his election, but the foundation charters presume his presence at the Michaelmas Assembly of the burgesses in each year, when, as mayor, he received the oaths of the newly elected bailiffs.

The mayor of the North Welsh boroughs, as elsewhere, performed the normal functions pertaining to the office. He presided over the general assemblies of the burgesses, and sat as chief magistrate in conjunction with the town bailiffs in the borough courts. He also supervised the local regulation of trade, by examining the measures used and testing the weights employed. The borough seal was affixed by his command to all apparatus of trade that met with his approval. In conjunction with six lawful men of the borough, the mayor surveyed the town measures twice a year.

(iii) *Alderman.*—Before the Act of Union, extant notices of the office of alderman appear only in the boroughs of Conway, Carnarvon, Beaumaris, and Newborough. Among the borough officers of the Principality of North Wales swearing fealty to

[1] *Overton in Days Gone By* (G. J. Howson), p. 63.
[2] G. G. Francis, *Neath Charters* (borough charter), p. 3.
[3] *Cymru Fu*, 1888, p. 142.

Edward, the Black Prince, on his creation in 1344, only one alderman is mentioned, namely, one John Kokeye of Beaumaris.[1] That the office of alderman continued to exist in this borough is to some extent certain from an incidental reference to the alderman of Beaumaris about a century later. The influence of the gild merchant on municipal development in North Wales, and indeed in Wales generally, during the period 1284-1536, lacks materials for its elucidation. It would appear from the action of Conway in a subsequent period, that there must have been some movement on the part of the community, instigated perhaps by the gild merchant, to elect their own representative to the chief magistracy, rather than the mayor-elect of the Crown. There was an alderman at Conway in 1527.[2] Thomas Dankinson was the acting alderman at Carnarvon in 1430,[3] and four years previous to this date Meredith ap Ken[wrig] occupied a similar position in Newborough.[4]

(iv) *The Bailiffs of the Borough.*—In boroughs, like those of North Wales, which long retained a democratic constitution, the office of bailiff was a most important and responsible position. The foundation charters stipulated for the election of two bailiffs by the borough community out of their own number, at Michaelmas in each year. Immediately on their election, they were sworn before the mayor rightly to execute all pertaining to the office of bailiff. There was apparently no new election in the case of the death of one bailiff in the course of the year.[5] The comprehensive duties of the bailiffs extended to the entire activity of the borough. They may be considered from the fiscal, judicial, and executive points of view.

(*a*) *Their Fiscal Functions.*—The bailiffs were the administrators of the royal and private revenue of the borough. As far as the royal issues were concerned this function was rather elastic. The Crown had no scruple in delegating the collection of any royal profits issuing in or near by a borough to the town bailiffs. We find the bailiffs of Beaumaris answering for the castle demesnes, though the constable had done so for nearly a century.

[1] *Orig. Docts.* (*Arch. Camb.*, suppl. vol., 1877), p. clii.
[2] *Hist. of Aberconway* (Williams), p. 97.
[3] See Appendix, p. 298.
[4] *Ib.*, p. 297.
[5] E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1171/9. Account of Hugh James, one of the bailiffs, for himself and Peter de Arare (deceased). Instances of this are rare in municipal history (Brossand, *Ville de Bourg*, 1883, p. 179). Cf. *Arch. Jour.*, xxvii. p. 484.

At the dissolution of the monasteries, the same bailiffs of Beaumaris append the rents of the lands of the old dissolved friary of Llanvaes in their account.[1] Upon any irregularity in the presentment of their returns at the local exchequer, the bailiffs were subjected to a small penalty or fine.[2] They were held responsible for the arrears of their year. In case of default their goods were distrained.[3]

(*b*) *Their Judicial Duties.*—Together with the mayor they presided over the borough courts. They, too, issued writs for all actions tryable at the borough courts, and moved cases of arrest and distraint, and were attendant to the precepts of the sheriff and justice touching the pleas of the Crown.

(*c*) *Their Executive Work.*—Here we may include the duties of the bailiffs in their relation to the public business of the municipality, such as the summoning of the general assemblies, the convening of local courts, and the proclaiming of the fairs. In all their duties the bailiffs found the *posse* of their function in the town courts, where acts of deforcement, refusal to carry out instructions, and other trespasses against the bailiffs were amenable.[4]

(v) *Sub-Bailiffs* (*sub-ballivi*).—Officers of this description appear at Conway and Carnarvon, and are frequently mentioned in the early and later plea rolls. They were apparently assistants attending the bailiffs in the execution of the subsidiary business of the borough courts. Pleas of debt between the bailiffs and the sub-bailiffs given on the plea roll of Richard II., point in this direction.[5]

(vi) *The Affeerers.* See above, s. Borough Courts.

(vii) *The Borough Coroner and the County Escheator.*—Under this title, it is proposed to give a rough outline of the administration of the casual and incidental profits of the Crown, issuing out of the Principality of North Wales during the period 1284-1536. This may be conveniently treated by considering the

[1] *Min. Acc.* 30-1 Henry VIII. (Anglesea), No. 46 (12s. 4d. yearly).
[2] *Ib.*, 1170/19, 1171/5.
[3] *Arch. Camb.*, IV. xiii. p. 310. Cf. *Min. Acc.* 1305/16 for an actual instance. The mayor of the borough had only a formal connection with the yearly account. On the close roll of 1342 (*Cal. Close Rolls*, 1341-3, p. 425) appears an order to the mayor and bailiffs of Bala and Harlech to be answerable to Walter de Manny for the farms of their boroughs. We also find the mayor of Conway formally despatching an early account of the borough to the exchequer at Carnarvon (*Min. Acc.* 1170/3).
[4] *Ib.*, 1170/3. [5] *Plea Roll* (Carnarvon), No. 1, mm. 8, 24*d*, 31.

offices of coroner and escheator, as well as the ultra-municipal functions of the town bailiffs in their capacity of royal rather than private servants.

We find coroners in the boroughs of Carnarvon, Conway, Criccieth, Harlech, Beaumaris, and Newborough during the first half of the fourteenth century. Bala never had such an officer, and the name coroner is lost to the contemporary records before the maenors of Nevin and Pwllheli were enfranchised. The original charters of the North Welsh boroughs sanctioned no election of town coroners by the burgesses. Were these early borough coroners, as were those of the hundreds of the county, nominees of the Crown, and elected by the King's writ ? [1]

The Statute of Wales (1284) enacted that ordinary coroners should be elected in every hundred or commote of the county. This was perhaps never actually done, as the few coroners' accounts that survive seem to prove. Two or three commotes were frequently put under the jurisdiction of one coroner. The county of Anglesea, consisting of six commotes, had but two coroners in 1329. Two coroners, likewise, did duty for the shire of Carnarvon, one in Lleyn and Eivionydd, and one in the district of Arvon.[2]

Usually there were two coroners in every borough, though one sometimes fulfilled the office.[3] The same coroner or coroners often did duty for more than one year.[4] The evidence of their few extant returns shows their function to have been like to that of the ordinary county coroner, whose duties were carefully described in the statute.[5] They account chiefly for the casual profits realised to the Crown from the lands and goods of persons dying intestate, the forfeited property of felons, *wrecca maris*, and treasure-trove. One or two examples may be quoted. Robert Fot and John de London, coroners of Conway, account for 21d., the value of the goods and chattels of one John the shepherd (Robert Fot's servant), who abjured the realm in 1316.[6] John returned in the following year, and suffered the inevitable penalty ; his surcoat was sold for 8d.[7] The coroners of Beaumaris, four years later, found 3d. in the pocket of one Hugh

[1] See note 5 below.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1170/19.
[3] *E.g., ib.* 1170/7-8.
[4] *E.g., ib.* 1170/13-16.
[5] *Statutes of the Realm* (Rec. Com.), pp. 58-9.
[6] *Min. Acc.* 1170/10.
[7] *Ib.*, 1170/11. 'Idem coronatores (as in 1170/10) respondunt de viiij*d* de uno courcepi Johannis Bercarii qui nuper regnum abjuravit et postea rediit et decolatus fuit infra dictum tempus.'

Swyper, who was accidentally drowned at sea.[1] A sword, knife, and chest, the joint property of two brothers (tailors by trade but robbers by reputation), who died in the prison of Conway whilst awaiting their trial, realised nearly 2s. 6d.[2] The executor of Ralph le Geyte, coroner of Criccieth in 1321, answers for 5s., the value of the horse of one Kevenerth, who died intestate, murdered by one Madoc the Crooked.[3] The only instance in the available accounts of a coroner answering for the issues of escheated borough lands, is that of the coroner of Carnarvon in 1317.[4]

In boroughs, like those of North Wales, where the royal interest was so predominant, it is not surprising to find occasional overlapping of functions. The *regalia* of the Crown accounted for in the coroners' account was often included in the bailiffs' return. One of the bailiffs sometimes acted as town coroner. This was the state of affairs at Harlech in 1343.[5] The profits of *wrecca maris* were commonly returned by the bailiffs. The bailiffs of Harlech render 6d., the price of an empty wine cask thrown on to their liberties in 1311.[6] The previous year the bailiffs of Criccieth sold the skin of a drowned calf.[7] In 1323, the remnants of wreckage in the form of an old rope, a small anchor, and a torn sail were sold for 6s., and accounted for not by the bailiffs, but by the coroners of Conway.[8]

The occasional profits derived from 'waifs and strays,' sometimes notified in the court rolls, are almost always included in the bailiffs' account, as were invariably the profits of animals forfeited in the borough fairs. The bailiffs of Beaumaris sell a forfeited ox for 8s. in 1312.[9] A horse was similarly forfeited during the spring fair at Criccieth in the following year, and sold for 3s. 4d.[10]

From about the middle of the fourteenth century to the middle of the sixteenth, we find no mention of coroners as such in North Wales. The last mention of town coroners appears in the Conway account for 1345. They were, no doubt, superseded by the county escheator, an official who became prominent in North Wales directly after the ravages of the Black Death.[11]

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1171/4. [2] *Ib.*, 1170/12. [3] *Ib.*, 1170/13.
[4] *Ib.*, 1170/12. [5] *Orig. Docts. (Arch. Camb.*, suppl. vol., 1877), p. civ.
[6] *Min. Acc.* 1211/3. [7] *Ib.*, 1170/6. [8] *Ib.*, 1170/15. [9] *Ib.* 1211/4.
[10] *Ib.*, 1211/5. [11] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1902-3, pp. 44-7.

County escheators appear in the North Welsh counties as early as 1348;[1] the profits of escheated lands as well as of forfeited goods and chattels[2] in county and borough, fall under their cognisance for centuries from this date.[3] The borough bailiffs, however, continued to answer for *wrecca maris*, waifs and strays, and often played an auxiliary rôle in the finding of treasure-trove and the goods of felons taken within their liberties. A piece of gold was found in Beaumaris in 1473 by Richard Comyn, one of the burgesses. The inquest upon it was taken by the county escheator.[4] The bailiffs of Beaumaris, in 1523, again hold an inquest touching a sum of money (£4. 4s.) found in the purse of a felon within their liberties. The county escheator, not the bailiffs, answers for the profits.[5]

(viii) *Mace-Bearers.*—The office of porter and mace-bearer in the town of Carnarvon was held by the King's janitor there, who was appointed by letters patent.[6] Similar janitorships existed at Beaumaris and Conway, but the office of mace-bearer is not distinguished as in the case of Carnarvon.

(ix) *Keepers of the Borough Prison* (*Custos prisonæ*).—See above, *s.n.* Constable of the Castle (3. Keeper of the Castle Gaol).

(x) *Town Crier.*—One of the burgesses of Conway is termed *le criour* in the early rental of the borough. Every borough apparently had its 'crier' for the summoning of the general assemblies, and particularly for the proclamation of the local fairs. At the present day the practice of tolling the borough bell before each meeting of the town council is carried on at Carnarvon.

(xi) *Officers of the Town Mills.*—(*a*) At Conway two stewards were annually appointed to supervise the profits and repairs of the town mills. A typical account of theirs is printed in Williams' *Aberconway.*[7] (*b*) A miller was usually chosen to superintend the grinding operations.[8] The oath of the miller of Conway, solemnly binding him to honest and prompt execution of his duty, is given at length in the above work.[8]

[1] *Exchqr. T. of R. Misc. Bk.*, 144, f. 144.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1152/9; 1154/6 (Newborough); 1155/2 (Beaumaris).
[3] *Ib.*, 1152/7 (Beaumaris); 1153/4 (Newborough); 1203/13 (Bala); 1204/3, 5 (Harlech); 1175/8 (Conway and Carnarvon); 18-19 Henry VII., No. 163 (Criccieth); 1174/2 (Pwllheli).
[4] *Ib.*, 1158/3. [5] *Ib.*, 13-14 Henry VIII., No. 86.
[6] See p. 145 above, n. 3. [7] Pp. 101-2 and appendix x. [8] *Ib.*, p. 102.

V. Municipal Paraphernalia[1]

(*a*) *Borough Seals.*—Six mediæval specimens have survived. (1) Newborough: an ancient seal of bronze belonging to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, bearing the legend, *Sigillum communitatis de Newburgh.* (2) Pwllheli: at the time of the Municipal Corporation Inquiry in 1835 a modern seal (made of steel), about sixty or seventy years old, was produced. The recorder of the borough then stated that he had seen an impression of an older one with the Virgin and Child upon it. This was probably the early fifteenth-century seal of Pwllheli, which bore the legend, *Sigillum communitatis ville de Porthely.* (3) Harlech: the old seal, dating from the time of Edward I., represents a castle triple-towered, and bears the inscription, *Sigillum communæ de Hardlagh.* (4) Carnarvon: the seal used by the community during the Middle Ages dates from about 1291; the device is a shield of the arms of England with a label of five points, with a conventional plant on either side and an eagle displayed in chief. The eagle above the shield is derived from the arms of Otto of Grandison, constable of Carnarvon, 20 Edward I. The marginal legend is, *S' communitatis villæ D'Karnarvon.* There are two other seals of a modern date, one of which is in present use. (5) Beaumaris: the original seal of Beaumaris, dating from 1295, bears a castle with three lions passant. It is inscribed with the legend, *Sigillum Communæ Communitatis villæ de Beaumaris.* (6) Conway: the mediæval seal (still in use) of the borough of Conway has upon it the castle with the river beneath, and the somewhat unusual legend, *Sigillum Provestriæ de Coneway.*

It may be noted that the seals of the North Welsh boroughs, like those of the generality of English boroughs during the Middle Ages, represent a fortress or a walled town.

Comparatively little is known of the insignia of the three boroughs of Criccieth, Nevin, and Bala. It is, however, certain that a modern seal of silver was produced for the corporation of Nevin in 1835.

(*b*) *Maces.*—There is seemingly no trace of the ancient maces

[1] The following notes on the municipal paraphernalia have been drawn chiefly from the following authorities:—*Corporation Plate and Insignia* (1895), by W. H. St. John Hope; *Arch. Camb.*, III. vi. p. 281; *Mediæval Architecture* (G. T. Clark), ii. p. 22; *Old Karnarvon* (W. H. Jones), p. 132; Lewis's *Top. Dic. of Wales*; *Town Life* (A. S. Green), i. p. 225; and the reports quoted.

used in these boroughs. The governing charter granted by Elizabeth to the burgesses of Beaumaris in 1592, contains minute directions to the two sergeants-at-mace of the borough as to the carrying of the overgilt or silver-graven maces, decked with the sign of arms of the realm of England. There is some tradition of an old silver mace which was once used at Newborough. No maces of either mediæval or modern date were found at Conway by the municipal commissioners in 1835, and the two silver maces of Carnarvon, described by the record commissioners in 1837, were the gift of Colonel Twisleton to the corporation in 1718.

(c) *Old Weights and Measures.*—There are several incidental references in the current records to the apparatus used for local trading purposes, but the surviving instances are very few. The municipal commissioners refer only to the old bronze measures and scales that were once used in the borough of Newborough.

VI

THE NORTH WELSH BOROUGHS AS ECONOMIC UNITS

This chapter treats of the most practical side of burghal life in North Wales during the Middle Ages, and for the sake of clearness, is split up into three convenient sections. In the first section, the commercial status of the North Welsh boroughs is considered with special reference to the acquisition and definition of their privileges, and their relations with other economic organisations in the Principality of North Wales, during the period of settlement. In the remaining sections, the actual as opposed to the theoretical side of their economic activity, is roughly sketched with the object of illustrating the everyday life of the burgesses, and the respective importance of the several boroughs as factors of internal and external trade.

I

In the first place, let us consider the acquisition and definition of the commercial privileges enjoyed by the North Welsh boroughs. The most prized of these was the gild merchant. The foundation charters grant the gild merchant with hanse and its pertaining liberties and customs, to each of the North Welsh boroughs. The burgesses supply their own interpretation of the privilege, in their replies to *quo warranto* proceedings during the reign of Edward III.[1] They claimed that all those within the borough who wished to enjoy its liberties, should be sworn before the burgesses justly to maintain the rights and liberties of the same town, and also to contribute a certain custom, called 'hanse,' towards the common weal of the borough. Having done this, and having paid lot and scot, they were recognised as fully-pledged free burgesses, with right to enjoy all the privileges of the town without any contradiction.

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 161, 163, 173, 180, 187, 194, 198.

In boroughs more elaborate, and of larger dimensions than those of North Wales, the gild merchant assumed an organic existence apart from that of the town community, exerting a considerable influence in matters of burghal government, in addition to exercising a general monopoly of the town's trade. There is nothing in the mediæval muniments of the North Welsh boroughs to show that the gild merchant ever flourished as a potent organisation, distinct from that of the borough. Throughout the Middle Ages it seems to enjoy a merely formal existence —a sort of machinery, as it were, for the admission of freemen into the full privileges of the borough. The fact that the hanse, or the gild entrance fee, was payable to the common coffer of the borough, suggests that burgess-ship and gildship were apparently co-extensive in the smaller boroughs of North Wales. There are no extant gild rolls to show the contrary.

The whole point of the gild privilege amounted to this. It gave the borough community a monopoly of trade regulation within the borough, the several burgesses paying hanse being allowed to trade freely therein. All those not paying hanse traded with the consent of the burgesses. It is probable that the majority of the North Welsh burgesses paid hanse. The fact that the privilege is associated with the payment of scot and lot, duties which generally fell upon resident burgesses, would seem to point to this. The famous customs of Hereford put some emphasis on the payment of lot and scot as a qualification of gildship. The citizens of Hereford were permitted to receive French, Welsh, Scottish, and all other loyal subjects of the English King into the membership of the city gild, on the condition that they dwelt in the city or its suburbs, and paid lot and scot with the citizens.[1] The proportion of non-resident burgesses in the North Welsh boroughs was never considerable. Towards the end of the reign of Edward I., a speculating merchant of Chester held some burgages by attorney in Beaumaris,[2] and a foreign merchant of Bordeaux in 1295 is termed a burgess of Conway.[3] Whether burgess in this latter instance implies an actual burgess of the borough, or a member of the local gild, it is futile to surmise. Residence in the same town was not generally a qualification for membership,[4] but there were special reasons why residence should be insisted upon in North Wales during the fourteenth and

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 130.
[2] P. 67 above.
[3] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1292-1301, p. 156.
[4] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. p. 29.

early fifteenth centuries. The attractions of the gild, like the importance of the borough, were of a political rather than of a commercial character.

The North Welsh boroughs are particularly free from disputes between the representatives of different gilds concerning the regulation and conduct of trade. The commercial conflict they experienced was of a different character, arising not so much from the monopoly of one or more gilds within a borough, as from the monopoly of a borough within a market district. Ever since the English conquest, one of the hopes most cherished by the local Welshman was for the dawn of the day when he (like the gildsman of the borough) could trade freely within the borough, as he had been wont among his native mountains. The North Welshmen were not altogether submissive to the order that their commercial traffic should be at the mercy of the English burgesses. The remission of the royal tolls and customs, from which the burgesses were exempt, was not the least interesting item in their political programme during the later Middle Ages.

In addition to the gild merchant the North Welsh burgesses acquired several other commercial immunities. Those of a jurisdictional bearing have been described in a previous chapter.[1] A further clause in the foundation charters made the burgesses quit of numerous commercial and feudal tolls, such as toll (*tolnetum*), lastage, passage, murage, pontage, stallage, leve, danegeld, gaywite, and other customs and exactions. An additional custom, pavage, specified only in the Bala charter, is evidently implied by the rest. This quittance covered an extensive area, holding good, in the words of the royal letters sanctioning the grant, ' in England as in all our other lands.'

The burgesses supply the meaning of these terms in the *quo warranto* returns quoted above. *Tolnetum*[2] freed them from toll on merchandise or wares bought and sold by them

[1] Ch. v. above.

[2] The enjoyment of this privilege was sometimes the outcome of a special charter. In the very next year after the issue of their original charters special letters, sanctioning the privilege of freedom from toll throughout the land, were granted to the burgesses of Conway and Carnarvon (see *Welsh Roll*, 13 Edward I., m. 2). This was done more particularly with the view of strengthening the commercial footing of the new burgesses in Ireland, where seemingly new-comers were extended a sparing welcome. Dr. Gross has some interesting remarks upon the modification of these general grants of freedom from toll (*Gild Merchant*, i. p. 44, n. 6).

in any fairs and markets in Wales or elsewhere. The right of passage (*passagium*) assured them the free transit of their goods, stock, and other merchandise over all royal ferries and bridges. *Muragium* exempted them from contributing to the maintenance of the town walls of the boroughs which they visited for purposes of trade. By virtue of the privilege of pontage they escaped the liability of bridge tolls at towns through which they passed; stallage, pavage, and several other immunities exonerated them from the duties levied in different boroughs for the repairing of streets and roads. Through the privilege of *leve* (they say) they paid nothing in any market or fair to certain officers called leave-lookers.[1] The grant of *lastagium* enabled the burgesses to carry their purchased goods wheresoever they would. A toll under this name was levied in some boroughs before such privilege was obtained.

As far as commercial status went, the North Welsh boroughs, by their original charters, were nominally brought into line with the rest of the royal boroughs within the King's dominion. The trading section of the inhabitants was allowed immunity in several important details. In the hands of flourishing communities with rosy commercial prospects and signs of industrial wealth, this general exemption proved an asset of considerable value. It was only of casual or occasional importance to the North Welsh burgesses during the Middle Ages. To them, the most practical and useful of their commercial privileges was the right of holding local markets and fairs in their own boroughs.

The market and fair franchises were separate from those of the borough, and usually had distinct charters behind them.[2] Altogether, twenty-two yearly fairs and nine weekly markets were held in the boroughs of the North Welsh Principality. Of these, there is extant charter authority for ten fairs and three markets, the rest being either based on charters now lost, or else established by prescriptive right.

[1] The leave-lookers seem to have been officers of considerable importance. At the time of the Municipal Corporation Inquiry in 1835, leave-lookers appear in four boroughs situated in the adjacent counties of Lancashire, Cheshire, and Denbigh (*e.g.* at Chester, Denbigh, Ruthin, and Liverpool). See Hemingway's *History of Chester*, i. p. 244, where it appears that the leave-lookers were accustomed to go round the city in order to preserve its privileges, and took small sums from non-freemen for leave to sell wares by retail. It is stated that officers of this character were appointed as early as 1297 under the title *custodes gildæ mercatoriæ*.

[2] *Eng. Hist. Review*, xi. p. 15.

Fairs and markets were held in the manorial vills of Nevin and Pwllheli long before they were made free boroughs. They were consequently confirmed by the foundation charters. A royal ordinance seemingly sanctioned the continuance of the old mart of Llanvaes in the new borough of Beaumaris. The latter borough has no market and fair charter of an early date. The same may be said of Criccieth, where trading transactions of some kind had taken place before the conquest. Bala, by virtue of a clause contained in its original charter, monopolised the market and fairs previously held at Llanvawr. The boroughs of Harlech and Carnarvon have no charters warranting their early markets and fairs, but for the grant of additional fairs at a later date they possess express charters. The market and fairs of Conway were apparently a new creation. The borough, moreover, included the vill of Deganwy, where a mart had flourished, with some intermission, since the days of Henry III.

The following is a complete list of the markets and fairs held in the North Welsh boroughs during the years 1284-1536. The table also includes notices of pre-conquest trading in the Principality, together with the respective market districts within which each borough enjoyed a monopoly of the usual trade.

Name of Borough.	Trading references before English Conquest and before Enfranchisement.	1284-1536.		District.	Authority.
		Markets.	Fairs.		
Conway, . .	Market held at Gannow every Tuesday, and a six days' fair on the morrow of St. Martin (*E.H.R.*, vol. xvii. p. 287).	Friday (Conway). Monday (Gannow).	St. Bartholomew (Aug. 24). St. Simon and St. Jude (Oct. 28).	Issaph. Ughaph. Nantconway. Creuddyn.	*Min. Acc.* 1170/3. *Add. MS.*, 33,352, f. 8. Williams' *Conway*, p. 48.
Carnarvon, .	Port dues taken before the Conquest (*Min. Acc.* 1171/8).	Saturday.	St. James (July 25). St. Michael (Sept. 29). St. John *ante portam Latinam* (May 6). St. Katherine's (Nov. 25).	Isgwyrvai. Uwchgwyrvai.	*Min. Acc.* 1170/5, 1171/8. *Harl. MS.*, 1954, f. 49*b*.
Criccieth, . .	*Tolnet' villae de Cruket* (*Min. Acc.* 1171/7, 1351).	Thursday, Wednesday[1] (1684).	St. Mark (April 25). St. Luke (Oct. 18).	Eivionydd.	*Min. Acc. Court Roll*, 255/54.
Nevin, . . .	*Forum*, fair, and port dues before its enfranchisement (*Min. Acc.* 1171/7).	Saturday.	Whitsuntide. Assumption (Aug. 15).	Dynllaen.	Orig. Chart.
Pwllheli, . .	Fair and borough tolls before its enfranchisement (*Min. Acc.* 1171/7).	Sunday, Wednesday (1684).	Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Sept. 14). Feast of All Saints (Nov. 1).	Gafflogion.	Orig. Chart.
Bala, . . .	Fairs held at Llanvawr up to about 1310 (*Min. Acc.* 1231/5).	Saturday.	Apostles Peter and Paul (Jan. 29). Founding of the Holy Cross (May 3).	Penllyn.	Orig. Chart.
Harlech, . .		Saturday.	St. Martin (Nov. 11). Mary Magdalena (July 20, 22). Whitsuntide. St. Lawrence (Aug. 10).	Ardudwy.	*Min. Acc.* 1170/3, 4. *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 192.
Beaumaris, .	Fairs held at Llanvaes (*Extent of Anglesea, temp.* Edward I.).	Saturday.	Ascension Day (Mar. or April). Nativity of St. Mary (Sept. 8).	Twrcelyn. Dyndaethwy. Talybolion.	*Min. Acc.* 1170/5.
Newborough,		Tuesday.	St. Martin (Nov. 11). Apostles Peter and Paul (June 29).	Meney.	*Min. Acc.* 1170/3.

[1] *Beaufort Progress*, Dineley MS. (ed. C. W. Banks, 1888), p. 103.

The above table concludes our enumeration of the chartered privileges enjoyed by the North Welsh burgesses for purposes of trade. All told, they included (1) the *gilda mercatoria* privilege; (2) special immunity from certain commercial tolls and feudal customs; (3) the right of holding local markets and fairs.

The acquisition of privileges was one thing, their exercise was another. Edward I. was alive to the importance of this in a newly subjected district like that of North Wales. He not only established the commercial borough in theory, but also imposed some new conditions that were calculated to further its success in practice. His commercial policy in the Principality bears the stamp of his political object. It shows his grim determination to subdue as well as to civilise the native Welsh. He established the borough to be a living factor in his plan of political and economic conquest. He improved the physical conditions of trade by clearing thick forests and erecting convenient quays[1]; he extended and introduced the commercial privileges, and also laid down fixed and definite ordinances for the double purpose of perpetuating the English method of trading, and of gradually extinguishing the old tribal civilisation of the North Welshmen.

The introduction of a new civilisation was no small matter. It gave rise to a period of closer and intenser conflict—no longer one of swords and battlefields, but of economic methods and social customs. Henceforth the cause of political unrest was as much one of economics as of politics. The endowment of the new boroughs with commercial privileges, inevitably traversed the old prescriptive and charter rights enjoyed by ecclesiastical and other bodies during the pre-conquest period. The introduction of novel trading methods, a central mart with fixed tolls, new measures, etc., was a task that required considerable tact and care. The adjustment of the rights of a conquered race, always a difficult problem, was certainly doubly so in North Wales during a period when the central government, through circumstances of distance and communication, was necessarily slow in enforcing the integrity of its provincial officials.

The civilising process was protracted and irregular. The

[1] See *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. pp. 139, 168.

prime necessity of maintaining a strong political hold on the country, to some extent subordinated economic to political considerations. Edward's commercial policy in North Wales exhibits very forcibly his avowed regard for the munition of the castles, the prosperity of the boroughs, and the detribalising of the native economy. He made the local markets contribute to the wants of the castle, and forced the rural hamlets into commercial allegiance to the new English boroughs. The towns in this way assumed a political significance peculiarly obnoxious to the bent of the national populace. They were attached to the boroughs by all methods that were likely to complete the work of English subjection, and were likewise forbidden residence in the same boroughs on account of circumstances likely to weaken the English hold. The Edwardian legislation imposing these conditions was, moreover, of a tentative character. It possessed the elasticity of the ordinance rather than the fixity of the statute, and was evidently formed to cope with the varying conditions of a people undergoing a gradual change of political opinion. The new laws were rigidly enforced during periods of exceptional unrest, and laxly administered again at times of comparative quiet.

Edward's regard for the munition of the castles comes out very clearly in one of his many arrangements for the sufficient victualling of the garrisons. Comparing the districts subjected to each castle with the districts whence each borough market drew its supplies, it will be seen that they agree in the main. The right of purveyance was largely exercised in North Wales soon after the conquest.[1] The constable of the castle enjoyed these rights, when necessary, for the purposes of the castle garrison, and the same privilege was extended to the local justiciar for the maintenance of the royal officers throughout the whole of North Wales.[2] Early in the fourteenth century, we have a petition from the free tenants of the latter district protesting against the wrongful use of this right by local officials. The tenants asserted that they were deprived even of their store or improving stock, and that at trifling prices. They implored that their goods should be purchased at their proper value in the local markets and fairs.[3] A table of fixed prices at which cattle and other commodities were to be purveyed for the royal

[1] Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1340-3, p. 63.
[2] *Harl. MS.*, 1954, ff. 49-51.
[3] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 3925.

use, was compiled about this time, namely, for every :—fat ox 5s., cow 3s. 4d., mutton 6d., goose 3d., capon 2d., duck 1d., small pork 2d., load of hay 1d., load of butter ½d., hoppet of oats ¾d., load of fuel wood ½d., load of turf ½d. These details are preserved in a series of valuable inquisitions taken towards the end of the reign of Edward III., touching the victualling of the castles of Criccieth, Conway, and Carnarvon. From these it also appears that the constable of the castle enjoyed a right of pre-emption over all saleable goods brought to the local borough. The constable, before all others, had the privilege of buying what was necessary for the castle, at a price agreed upon between him and the owners of the goods. At Carnarvon, the porter of the castle took part of his stipend in the way of minor tolls from merchandise brought into the town for sale, namely, an armful of fuel from every load, two turves out of every load of turf, and a handful of hay out of every load of hay. He also received one halfpenny a day for each distrained animal kept in his custody, but out of this he had to provision them with fodder.[1]

Edward's concern for the prosperity of the English burgesses whom he had induced to reside in North Wales is shown in his attempt to secure for them a complete monopoly of the trade there. The market districts of the boroughs (some of date anterior to the conquest) were definitely established, and special injunctions encouraged the attendance of buyers and sellers. One enactment stipulated that one person from each house should visit the weekly market of his district for the purpose of buying and selling. This was hardly practicable, and after a few years was modified by Prince Edward of Carnarvon, who ordained the presence only of those having business to transact.[2]

Another ordinance, framed ostensibly for the maintenance and protection of the boroughs founded by the Conqueror for the habitation of Englishmen only, proclaimed that no Welshman should trade outside the mercatorial towns (*villas mercatorias*).[3] This dealt a blow at the old-time practice of the tribal Welsh; and a subsequent ordinance, similar in character, aimed at securing a monopoly of trade for the free boroughs only, irrespective of the commercial immunities then enjoyed by other towns in North Wales. The ordinance was to the following effect :—'No markets, no fairs, nor any other places of trade forsooth, for

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 202. [2] *Ib.*, p. 212. [3] *Ib.*, p. 132.

the buying and selling of oxen, cows, horses, etc., excepting small articles of food such as butter, milk, and cheese, shall be held elsewhere in North Wales than in the towns of Conway, Beaumaris, Newborough, Carnarvon, Criccieth, Harlech, and Bala.'[1]

These Edwardian ordinances formed the transitional links between the old and new economy. They brought the boroughs into immediate contact with the old conditions of trade in North Wales. The result was a two fold conflict. On the economic side, it resolved itself into a struggle with the North Welshmen, who reluctantly submitted themselves to the idea of centralised trade as represented by the market districts assigned to the several boroughs. On the political side, it was a conflict between the free boroughs and the smaller towns of North Wales that were gradually developing their commercial side. The attempt to confine the trade of the North Welsh territory to the free boroughs was prejudicial to the smaller market towns.[2]

The North Welshmen, prior to the innovations of the borough system, had been accustomed to buy and sell articles of food, horses, oxen, cows, etc., *in patria* in neighbourly fashion, one from the other at will according to the common law of the land. They petitioned Prince Edward of Carnarvon that they should continue to do so without being liable to amercement. The request, of course, was not entirely granted, but Edward permitted to travellers and others far removed from market, the privilege of trading *in patria* for such necessaries of life as milk, butter, and cheese.[3] All infringements of this rule were to be precisely recorded in the court rolls of the local commotes.

Several refractory Welshmen persisted in making their purchases *in patria*, thus depriving both the Crown of its toll, and the borough communities of their incidental customs. The Anglesea men, pioneers of one of the early post-conquest revolts, were slow to patronise the new borough market of Beaumaris. Edward I. had strictly ordained that the men of the three adjoining commotes were to trade there.[4] The burgesses, in one of the Kennington petitions to Prince Edward of Carnarvon,

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 137. North Wales (*tota Northwallia*), in the Kennington series of petitions, represents the district of the three shires of Anglesea, Carnarvon, and Merioneth (less the commote of Mawddwy).

[2] *E.g.* Bangor, Trefriw, Aber, Towyn, Dolgelly, and Aberffraw.

[3] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 135, n. 1.

[4] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 223.

complained that the inhabitants of these commotes withheld themselves from Beaumaris and, more or less out of racial spite, betook themselves and their saleable goods to the town of Newborough, because the burgesses there were all from South Wales. Most of the burgesses of Newborough, we know, were Welshmen from the old town of Llanvaes. In a subsequent petition to Edward of Carnarvon, when King, the burgesses of Beaumaris assert that the Welshmen of the county of Anglesea continued to merchandise with one another *in patria*, which custom was much to the damage of our lord the King and his burgesses.[1]

The court rolls, covering some of the later years of the earlier half of the fourteenth century, show many instances of country trading by Welshmen of the three counties of North Wales.[2] A number of inquisitions and other documents towards the close of the reign of Edward III., almost suggest an organised boycott of the borough markets on the part of the Welsh. In 1366 the burgesses of Beaumaris found it necessary to procure especial letters patent sanctioning the old ordinances of Edward I.[3] A similar request was subsequently made by the burgesses of Beaumaris, Conway, Criccieth, and Carnarvon. The men of the latter town stated that two hundred or more had withdrawn from their market, to the loss of the King and the community of about five hundred marks. Accordingly, charters enjoining the strict observance of the old ordinances as to trading in the English boroughs were granted to these boroughs in 1372. Similar complaints were made again in 1374.[4] This grievance of declining markets was probably due in great part to the depopulating influence of the Black Death. The poverty [5] that followed made the payment of commercial tolls, at best of times irksome to the Welsh, a legitimate grievance. This was one of the silent forces that led up to and fostered the national insurrection under Glyndwr.

Until the conquest in 1282 the North Welsh apparently never paid market tolls. At least one of their requests to Edward of Carnarvon in 1305, was that they should be required to pay tolls as they were accustomed in the time of their own princes—to wit, in fairs only. The royal answer to the petition brought no

[1] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13,936.
[2] See *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1902-3, appendix iv.
[3] *Harl. MS.*, 1954, f. 53*b*.
[4] *Ib.*, ff. 49-51, 53*a*, 54*b*.
[5] Cf. *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, as above, pp. 44-6.

respite. Tolls were to be levied in all markets and fairs, as was usual in mercatorial towns and boroughs.[1]

These tolls were obviously regarded by the old Welsh free traders as one of the objectionable features of the new civilisation. There is no authentic table of the actual tolls taken in the boroughs, but incidental notices of the tolls charged in the contemporary market towns of Dolgelly and Towyn (co. Merioneth), Bangor and Aber (co. Carnarvon), have survived. They are as follows:—of every horse, 4d.; of every cow or ox, 2d.; of every sheep and pig, ½d.; of every ox or cow hide, ½d. (1d. at Bangor); of every sack of wool, 4d.; of every entire cloth, ½d.; of every horse-load of honey, butter, and corn, ½d.; and of other small merchandise according to bulk.[2]

On an early Anglesea court roll we find a Welshman amerced 40d. for selling a horse outside the *forum* of Beaumaris. The toll lost to the Crown in consequence is said to be 4d.[3] It would thus appear that the tolls chargeable in the markets of North Wales were all based on an uniform scale. The later history of the mediæval toll agitation is considered below.

Another grievance of the native inhabitants arose from the importation of new-fangled measures. The borough was again the pioneer in this direction. The ordinances of the Conqueror stipulated that no measures were to be used in the English boroughs unless agreeing with those of the lord the King, and sealed with the sign of the communities of the several towns. All weights and measures had to be subjected to official scrutiny twice a year, and any one found with two measures, a large one to buy and a small one to sell, was liable to serious punishment.[4] The extension of the use of these English measures to the rural districts was not immediate. In 1305, the Welsh inhabitants of North Wales begged to be exempted from the distraints and amercements to which they were liable at the sheriff's tourn for not having bushels, gallons, and such measures. Their request was considerately granted on condition that all buying and selling should be transacted in the local fairs and markets.[5] The use of weights and measures, in agreement with the English standards such as bushels, gallons, ells, and the like, was not legally enforced in the rural districts of North Wales until the year 1339. Among the general ordinances drawn up by

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 213. [2] *Ib.*, pp. 136, 142.
[3] *Court Rolls*, 215/6. [4] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 242-4. [5] *Ib.*, p. 213.

Edward III. at this date for the better government of North Wales, one refers to the introduction of new weights and measures.[1] One Richard de Kymberle was appointed to the office of the market there, with power to ensure the actual observance of the order.[2] Nothing very tangible resulted, the office of the market soon disappeared, and the old Welsh measures lingered in the mountainous districts down to a comparatively modern date.

The second or political phase of the economic and commercial conflict waged by the North Welsh burgesses is connected with their efforts to secure an entire monopoly of trade despite the prescriptive and other commercial rights vested in the Church and other bodies. The bishops of Bangor, and the representatives of the local monasteries, were not allowed to enjoy their prescriptive rights without undergoing the ordeal of a legal contest.

The conflict with the Bishop of Bangor lasted well into the fourteenth century. The commonalty of English burgesses in North Wales endeavoured to enforce the strict letter of the ordinances made by Edward I. They maintained that all tenants, of the Bishop as of the King, should attend their borough markets; and further, that the Bishop's tenants, as others, were not on any account to brew for purposes of sale and profit within a radius of eight miles of a free borough.[3] It was the opinion of the burgesses that the privileges extended to ecclesiastics and other persons by princes of Welsh blood had lapsed with the conquest. From one point of view this was true, but the burgesses forgot what the Bishop and others remembered, namely, the promise of a regrant or confirmation of old-time privileges on coming to the King's peace.

A general proclamation was made throughout Wales at the time of the conquest, to the effect that all Welshmen and others, of whatsoever condition, coming to the King's peace should be allowed to enjoy their possessions and liberties as heretofore.[4] Anian, then Bishop of Bangor, came to the King's peace, and by a charter dated 12th October 1284, he was permitted to exercise his usual jurisdictional privileges *qua* bishop, and both he and his men by virtue of the same letters were freed from toll

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1339-41, pp. 199, 249-54.
[2] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1338-40, p. 322.
[3] Cf. *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 135, n. 5.
[4] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 137.

throughout the realm. Anian also continued to enjoy his prescriptive right of holding Sunday markets at Bangor and a four days' fair there at the feast of St. Trillo. Anian's successor, Matthew, by virtue of a charter 10th August 1311, was allowed to hold an additional four days' fair during the feast of St. Luke in each year. The tenants of the bishopric continued throughout to exercise their old right of free trade amongst themselves, within the pale of the episcopal territory.[1]

The burgesses of the English boroughs protested strongly against the continuance of this latter usage in districts within an eight-mile radius of their towns. Early in the reign of Edward III. we have an interesting suit, showing at once the vigour of the struggle and the consequences it had for the borough. In the Bishop's town of Llanwnda, situated on the foreshore three miles to the south of Carnarvon borough, two bond tenants, named Ieuan ap Eignon ap Heilyn and David ap Jenkyn, persisted in selling beer, cattle, mead, skins, fish, and other merchandise, much to the detriment of the royal borough of Carnarvon. John de Hampton and Roger de Diton, prosecutors for the community in a plea of trespass brought against the above persons before William de Shaldeford, the deputy justice, estimated the damage to the Crown in respect of toll, and to the community in respect of customs, at about £20. The result of the suit is not given in the part of the proceedings now remaining.[2] The Bishop's tenants were evidently exercising their old prescriptive rights. Moreover, it seems probable that William de Shaldeford decided in favour of the burgesses. About this time we find the Bishop complaining to the Crown that the sheriffs and bailiffs of the counties of Anglesea and Carnarvon prevented his burgesses from selling corn and other merchandise where they wished. In reply, the privilege of free trading was conditionally extended to the Bishop's men.[3] Moreover, it was the *quo warranto* proceedings of 1353 that finally settled the status of the Bishop and his tenants. As the result of these proceedings the Bishop was allowed to enjoy all commercial privileges held by charter grant, but for all his prescriptive privileges he was put in mercy, and their renewal postponed to a subsequent court. An agreement favourable to the tenants of the bishopric was arrived at in a

[1] *Rec of Carn.*, p. 133 *et seq.* [2] *A.O. Misc. Bk.*, No. 166, ff. xxvii.
[3] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13,683.

parley between Richard de Stafford and the other Justices in Eyre in North Wales and Bishop Matthew, which was embodied in a patent of Edward III. These letters, dated 8th October 1352, confirmed the above agreement, made in the time of the Black Prince (*circa* 17-25 Edward III.), namely, that the Bishop's tenants should buy and sell all kinds of victuals in North Wales, *within*, as well as eight miles *outside of* the English towns, and this notwithstanding proclamations to the contrary.[1] It was the lack of this *non-obstante* clause that threw a glare of suspicion on the Bishop's rights up to this, but the preceding letters brought the conflict to a close.

The result weakened the trade monopoly of the boroughs. Representatives of the religious houses of Conway, Cymmer, and Bardsey, and of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, likewise successfully maintained their prescriptive right of freedom from toll in local fairs, markets, ports, and ferries throughout North Wales.[2]

The North Welsh burgesses found their nominal monopoly further encroached upon by the continued practice of holding immemorial fairs, and the Crown did not scruple to grant commercial privileges to other royal vills in the Principality. For instance, Bala and Harlech by no means enjoyed the monopoly of trading rights in Merionethshire. The usual fairs were continued at Dolgelly and Towyn,[3] the respective marts of Talybont and Estimanner—two commotes that contained no boroughs. The burgesses of Conway, too, were reluctant witnesses of the establishment of markets and fairs in the manorial town of Aber.[4] The vill of Trefriw, higher up the Conway, somewhat later monopolised the trade of the commote of Nantconway. Both operations affected their local mart. In Anglesea, again,[5] the maenor of Aberffraw held markets and fairs of its own since the year 1330, and the old prescriptive fair of Llanerchymedd, in the same county, provided a flourishing mart for the Welsh cloths produced in the island.[6] The general plea made by the Crown attorneys in proceedings of *quo warranto* against grants of this character, is that they were made unwittingly of the ordinances of Edward I., and unmindful of the

[1] See *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 254-7, and *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1377-81, p. 291.
[2] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 144, 146, 147, 199, 203.
[3] *Ib.*, pp. 141-2. [4] *Ib.*, pp. 141-2.
[5] *Ib.*, pp. 190-1. Cf. *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1341-3, p. 633.
[6] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 159.

prejudice accordingly occasioned to the English boroughs. The holders were on this score nominally amerced and their privileges restored.

After this date, the commercial position of the North Welsh boroughs fluctuated with the gradual progress of the English policy of settlement. There was no theoretical change of status until the Tudor period. The position of the English boroughs was henceforth revolutionised not so much by the diminution or modification of their existing privileges, as by their extension to the native Welsh. The Edwardian policy, from the moment of its introduction, imposed comparative limitations on the commercial freedom of the Welsh people. This was the consistent policy of English kings in their pacification of Wales. A commercial significance was read into the political yoke. During the period of settlement, the North Welshmen were placed in the same handicapped position as their ancestors were under Henry III. and Edward I., before the political conquest was an accomplished fact. They therefore persistently strove for the rights of citizenship, which in their eyes was tantamount to being raised to the level of the English burgesses there.

In the commercial sense, this is perceptible in their persistent struggle against the payment of tolls, from which the burgesses were exempt. The stronger and more purely English boroughs were evidently (and perhaps necessarily) averse to this particular aspect of Welsh progress, whilst the smaller boroughs, more Welsh in sympathy, seemed to have welcomed the change. During the disturbed and demoralising period following the national rebellion under Glyndwr, the Welsh laboured under the disabilities imposed by the penal statutes of Henry IV. There are no indications that the North Welshmen materially improved their commercial status, though the comparative insignificance of the toll returns in the boroughs of little political importance would seem to show that royal tolls were carelessly collected under the Lancastrian kings.

It is not until the Tudor period that we have any definite pronouncement upon this point. The inhabitants, partaking of the general awakening infused into the national life by the accession of Henry VII., made a final attempt to release their internal trade from its feudal and political restrictions. A clause in the great charter granted by Henry to the inhabitants of North Wales towards the close of his reign, exempted them,

as well as strangers of whatsoever condition coming into the three counties of North Wales for the purpose of buying and selling, from toll, stallage, passage, and other customs throughout the above counties, as well (note) within the towns of the Englishmen there as without. This put the ' foreign inhabitants ' of the North Welsh Principality on the same commercial footing as the men of the borough. The latter, moreover, particularly those of Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris, immediately resented the grant. Two years later they succeeded in getting articles of injunction against the inhabitants of the three shires effecting a nominal reversion to their status as of old.

To what extent the tenor of these injunctions was carried into actual practice is not very clear. It is certain that many of the exemptions warranted in Henry's charter held good. Several of the borough communities, however, continued to pay nominal sums in respect of the royal tolls taken in the borough throughout the Tudor period. The tendency was for the royal revenue to become more and more confined to the issues of the borough lands, while the new corporation derived its income largely from the purely commercial dues. The rents and farms payable to the Crown by boroughs at the present day represent the old returns of the Tudor period less the amount paid in respect of trading tolls due to the Crown during the Middle Ages.

North Welshmen do not appear to have regarded the question of tolls as a burning grievance after the acquisition of Henry VII.'s charter. At last a death-blow had been given to the old political monopoly of trade enjoyed by the English burgesses. The commerce of the North Welsh Principality was in this way rid of many of its mediæval and feudal impediments. The English burgesses and the native populace were being gradually transplanted into a political environment, in which considerations of race were no longer to affect the economic and commercial development of the country.

II

We now come to the consideration of the actual as opposed to the theoretical side of the economic activity of the boroughs of North Wales during the Middle Ages. It will be convenient in the first place, to treat of the internal activity of the several boroughs as economic units and distributive centres of local

trade. The more purely commercial activity of the boroughs is left over to a general section on the external trade of the Principality of North Wales during the years 1284-1536.

Taking the North Welsh boroughs as local economic units, we treat of the ways and means of burghal life, the occupations of the respective communities, and their reciprocal relations with the inhabitants of their town districts. Incidental notices of their mediæval condition are somewhat rare. The following notes hardly reveal a continuous development, they merely present a bald narrative of the facts gleaned here and there, bearing upon the predominant features of their economic life, namely, agriculture, industry, and trade.

1. Carnarvon

(*a*) *Agriculture.*—The lands of the borough, covering an extent of 1464½ acres, were of unequal agricultural value. The better lands were severally arrented to the burgesses at two pence per acre, the poorer lands of marshy and stony soil being let at a penny an acre.[1] From the evidence of a rental compiled in 1298,[2] it appears that the majority of the inhabitants were actively engaged in agriculture. Ten out of a total of sixty-one held burgages only. Local artisans, such as carpenters, smiths, tailors, bakers, and butchers, possessed their little allotted tenements. The burgesses, the same document informs us, safely deposited the produce of their outlying fields in spacious granaries within the walls of the town. Cow sheds and other shelters for the live stock were erected outside the walls.

Some of the town lands, despoiled by the revolt of Madoc ap Llywelyn in 1294, remained uncultivated for many years.[3] The town was so ravaged by the insurgents at this date, that the burgesses were forced to borrow a sum of £100 from the Crown to amend their state, and they were at the same time excused from paying any rents for a period of ten years.[4] The burgesses undertook to repay the loan by instalments of £20. The fact that the sum was not paid back until the year 1352,[5] nearly sixty years later, reflects somewhat on the economic condition of the borough during the early half of the fourteenth century. Some entries in the local court rolls throw an interesting

[1] See above, pp. 47-8.
[2] *Rentals and Surveys* (P.R.O.), 17/86.
[3] *Min. Acc.* 1170/5.
[4] *Ib.*, 1211/2 and 1171/8.
[5] *Ib.*, 1171/8.

light upon the rural atmosphere of town life in mediæval Carnarvon. One Julian Sturdi (a burgess) is at one time amerced for stealing three sheaves of corn, the property of a co-burgess named William de Atteford.[1] Another defaulter in the person of Alice, the wife of William de Derbi, is characterised as a breaker of hedges outside the walls during the night.[2]

The borough lands yielded a supply of corn insufficient for the use of the town inhabitants. In 1316 the burgesses complained of the barrenness, marshiness, and smallness of their lands, and upon request[3] were allowed to seek corn elsewhere, in Anglesea, Chester, and Ireland.[4] Men of the town of Carnarvon were again specially deputed to buy corn in Ireland in 1331.[5] Small quantities of corn from this and other sources were periodically drafted into Carnarvon during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries for the adequate sustenance of the castle and town populace. Forestallers of corn brought to the local port were heavily amerced in the borough courts.[6]

During the progress of the revolt of Owen Glyndwr the town was almost reduced to famine. The Welsh, according to the report of the burgesses, were so proud and malicious towards the English folk of that district, that they dared not shift for fear of death, nor could they venture to plough and sow through fear of the rebellion.[7] During the last siege of the town by Owen and his followers, the poor of the town were supplied with food from the castle store.[8] The hard lot of the burgesses, as of the soldiers of the garrison, was further relieved by the generosity of a local tradesman named Thomas Walton, who placed a pipe of wine and other of his victuals at their disposal. Somewhat later, Thomas made good use of this action when seeking the grant of certain lands in the county of Carnarvon.[9]

An interesting contemporary account of the damages and losses sustained by the burgesses of the town during the above revolt, further indicates the agricultural character of the town community. It gives the names of nineteen English burgesses, the total value of whose losses is roughly estimated at £1275. 2s. 3d. This amount included the value of about a thousand beasts,

[1] *Court Rolls*, 215/46.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 12,920.
[4] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1313-17, p. 387.
[5] *Ib.*, 1330-4, p. 180.
[6] *Court Rolls* (P.R.O.), 215/46.
[7] *Ancient Correspondence* (P.R.O.), vol. ii., No. 41.
[8] *Exchqr. K.R. Acc.* 43/39.
[9] *Min. Acc.* 1216/2.

chiefly cattle. The barbican of the town gate was also seriously damaged by the insurgents, and sixty houses in the suburbs of the town were demolished, to the loss of the Crown and community of the borough of £100.[1] This is the earliest known reference to the suburbs of the town of Carnarvon as such. They were situated outside the East Gate towards Old Segontium. The inhabitants apparently through poverty, or owing to the nature of their occupation, did not care, or were forbidden, to reside within the borough. In the reign of Henry VIII. these same suburbs, consisting of several houses and gardens, were wholly occupied by Welshmen.[2]

There were two water mills at Carnarvon, one on the Cadnant stream within the walls, and one outside the walls near Porth Mawr. The former was the older, but both are said to have been repaired in 1307.[3] They were seldom farmed by the town community. Mary Maunsel, Edward of Carnarvon's first nurse, received in 1312 an annuity of £5 out of the yearly issues of the King's mills at Carnarvon.[4] The pool of the King's mill (?) was repaired in 1316 after a petition from the burgesses that their corn was improperly ground.[5] Both mills were subsequently farmed by Edmund de Dyneton (1318), Hugh de Foston (1319), and by Thomas Cary (1334-52). The profits of the fisheries of the mill pond were generally included with those of the mills. During the years 1353-8 the mills and piscary were leased to individual farmers at £3 per annum. William de Hampton and Thomas Middleton farm the same profits for six years in 1351, the rent for the first year being £10, and £14 for each of the remaining five years. They were again farmed at this latter amount during the first eleven years of Richard II.'s reign; for the remainder of the reign no one wished to arrent them. They were consequently approved; the approver (*appruator*), after deducting the tithes due to the parson of Carnarvon, his own stipend, and other incidental expenses, returned the net profits to the local exchequer. These ranged in amount from 36s. 8d. to £10. 12s. Towards the close of Richard's reign, on the 17th of December 1398, one John Parry leased the issues of the town mills, together with the piscary of the mill pond, for ten

[1] *Exchqr. Miscell.* 6/38.
[2] *Min. Acc.*, 24-5 Henry VIII. (Carnarvon), No. 14.
[3] *Ib.*, 1170/5.
[4] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1307-13, p. 448.
[5] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1313-8, p. 265.

years at an annual rent of sixteen marks, but owing to the national revolt he did not enjoy the full term of his lease. During the early years of Henry IV.'s reign the mills were approved by Thomas Walton, the profits in one year amounting to £6. 12s. 0½d.; and no more, it is said, because the mills were robbed of their grain by the Welsh rebels. Both mills were burnt and destroyed by the fifth year of Henry's rule. In the ninth year the mill near the gate began to return profits anew, the other mill in the meantime being in decay. Both mills in the very next year, in conjunction with two fishing weirs on the Seiont, were leased for a term of twenty years to Thomas Holwell and Thomas Barneby for the small sum of 30s. yearly. In the second year of Henry V. the same mills and weirs were arrented at £2. 13s. 4d., and at double this amount during the years 1419-38. In 1439 the farm of the same premises was about £12, and continued at this figure until 1474. From this date to the close of the reign of Edward IV. the royal profits were generally about £3 less. During the reign of Henry VII. the farm of the mills, with three (instead of two) weirs, varies from £10 to £10. 13s. 4d. up to the year 1505, from which date to the close of the following reign the same premises were leased, usually for twenty-one years, at an annual rent of £11. 15s.[1]

The fluctuating farms of the local mills show how the economic condition of the borough was affected by the political disturbances of the time. There was evidently more stability during the Tudor period.[2] Throughout, the mills remained the property of the Crown, and were constantly repaired at the royal expense, except when this responsibility was undertaken by the lessees.

(*b*) *Industry.*—Almost all the inhabitants of Carnarvon during the Middle Ages were engaged in composite occupations. A considerable proportion of the artisan class were of the manorial type common to almost every mediæval village, such as the smith, carpenter, tailor, and cobbler. In addition to supplying the ordinary necessities of their fellow-townsmen, these artisans were themselves engaged in agriculture. The same is also true

[1] For these details see *Min. Acc.* (co. Carnarvon), *s.a.c.*; *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1422-9, p. 57; *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 152.

[2] The burgesses were in considerable arrears with their rents during the reigns of Henry V., Henry VI., and Edward IV. With two minor exceptions they returned their full complement under Henry VII. and Henry VIII. (*Min. Acc.*).

of the bakers, brewers, butchers, and fishermen who cared for articles of food and drink for the town inhabitants. The commercial class is best represented by the occasional *mercers* dealing in divers articles of small merchandise, and also by an inconsiderable number of merchants proper, who sprang into prominence later in connection with the transmarine trade in wine, iron, and other staple commodities. Tanned hides were exported in small quantities from the port of Carnarvon in the reign of Henry VIII. This fact, and the existence of a 'Skinner's Lane'[1] of great antiquity at Carnarvon, are all that is known of the early tanning industry there. A perusal of the names of the borough bailiffs during the years 1284-1536 shows a very small percentage of artisan representatives, and the descriptive nomenclature of other documents produces nothing beyond saddler, swineherd, shepherd, plumber, porter, and glover, in addition to those already mentioned. There is nothing in the available evidence to warrant the existence of any system of organised industry such as a craft gild.

The only existing notices of successful industry occur in connection with the fisheries. The local fisheries of the Seiont and Cadnant streams come in for early, and with few exceptions, continued attention during the mediæval period. The only weir in actual use up to 1352 (25 Edward III.) was 'the weir under the castle' (*a*). Soon after the conquest it realised a royal profit of £2 yearly, but by the beginning of the reign of Edward II. the issues fall to 26s. 8d., and throughout the first half of the reign of Edward III. its profits were insignificant, varying from 1s. to 4s. yearly. During the years 25-34 Edward III. the old rent of 40s. is paid. A second weir, called 'the weir under Moiloncoyl' (*b*), destroyed by a storm late in the reign of Edward I., was rebuilt in 1353 at the sole expense of one Thomas de Petryngham, who farmed the old site for fifteen years at 20s. per annum. This weir was entirely destroyed about forty years later, not to be built again. A third weir, termed 'the weir under the castle to the south near Moiloncoyl' (*c*), was erected for the first time in 1361, and was arrented for a period of twenty years to three of the local townsmen at a sum of 10s. yearly. The same townsmen farm the same weir (*c*) together with the 'weir under the castle' (*a*) during the years 1380-95 at a yearly rent of 50s., and further during the years

[1] W. H. Jones, *Old Karnarvon*, p. 47.

1396-1409 at 26s. 8d. The profits of these two weirs were subsequently let with the issues of the town mills (*q.v.*). A fourth weir, called the 'weir near to Blakestone,' was constructed in 1385, and was held by the well-known Richard Ince for term of life at the small sum of four pence yearly. The weir became vacant at Richard's death ten years later, and it remained so, as late as 1409. A new fishery, extending 'from the bank of the Cadnant near the castle to "Haberhovek" near the culverhouse,' is arrented for the first time to Rowland Stanley in 1438. Another weir was again built in 1454 in a place called 'Weyke Patrik,' within the town of Carnarvon, 'from the black rock opposite the land of Thomas del Holte to the land of Holy Mary the Virgin.' It was first demised to Nicholas Stodart for a term of twenty years at six pence per annum.[1]

This persistent erection and arrenting of weirs points to a somewhat thriving fishing industry at Carnarvon during the fifteenth century. During the Tudor period the Crown continued to take the nominal rents of three weirs or 'kiddallau' (as they were termed in the vernacular) and of the piscary of 'Wele (*sic*) Patrik.' There is nothing to indicate the exact part played by the local fishermen in the herring trade, save that herring-boats occasionally called at the port of the town.

(*c*) *The Local Ferry.*—The burgesses of Carnarvon showed no great inclination to farm the royal boat that plied on the local ferry of Tal y Foel, one of the three main ferries connecting the county of Carnarvon with the island of Anglesea. The boat was sometimes utilised for the conveyance of stone and other material for the garrison works. As a rule, it was farmed by individuals who were occasionally prominent burgesses of Carnarvon.[2] Curiously it was never farmed by the community of the burgesses, in strange contrast to the municipal enterprise shown at Conway and Beaumaris.

(*d*) *Markets and Fairs.*—The weekly market for the surrounding commotes of Isgwyrvai and Uwchgwyrvai was by ordinance held at Carnarvon every Saturday. Two fairs, one in July and one in September, were usually held until the year 1352, when the Black Prince established two additional fairs there for the months of May and November in each year. The toll returns during the first half of the fourteenth century are somewhat irregular, those

[1] *Min. Acc.* (town of Carnarvon), *s.a.c.*
[2] See *ib.* (co. Carnarvon) *passim.* Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1422-9, p. 48.

of the market varying from as little as 8¼d. to as much as 16s. 4½d.[1] This is perhaps what we should naturally expect during a period of unsettled political conditions, when the Welsh, as we know, were unwillingly apprentices to the new system of trading.

Endorsed on the town rental of 1298 are several important provisions relating to the early trading economy of Carnarvon. They apparently represent the special counterpart of the general ordinances drawn up by English officials soon after the conquest for the regulation of the boroughs. From these ordinances it appears that the burgesses were allowed to trade with their co-burgesses, and also with other English merchants. Each burgess, too, had the privilege of erecting shops or sheds for the custody of his saleable goods, and foreign merchants were entitled to hire stalls for the display of their merchandise. The local butchers and fishmongers were especially forbidden to sell any of their goods to foreign comers. This rule was evidently framed with the object of securing adequate sustenance for the inhabitants of the town.

The *forum* of Carnarvon is conjectured to have been in the Old Castle Square.[2] Here the country folk displayed the produce of their holdings, which consisted of butter, cheese, skins, corn, peat, together with their live stock of cattle, horses, sheep, goats, and pigs. Small quantities of cloth and wool were also sold in the market.[3] The exchange trade comprised wine, salt, iron, and articles of small merchandise. Merchants of Chester and other towns made it a special point to attend the local fairs with necessaries for the administrative offices that were located there.[4]

(*e*) *The Local Port.*—The port of Carnarvon flourished as an avenue for trade in the time of the old Welsh princes. With the conquest it underwent vast alterations, a new quay being constructed to ensure the safety of the castle. A small custom called *kiltoll* was taken of every ship (eight pence) and boat (four pence) entering the port. This is apparently what is referred to as the *custuma portus*[5] of the maenor of Carnarvon, which was collected primarily from the local herring-boats calling at the port, and later from other ships and boats engaged in the maritime trade of

[1] For authorities see tabular list of markets and fairs above. A complete list of the available toll returns for each borough is given in the Appendix.

[2] W. H. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

[3] *Court Rolls*, 215/46, 49-52.

[4] *Min. Acc.* (chamberlains'), North Wales.

[5] *Ib.*, 1171/7.

North Wales. The town bailiffs collected the local kiltoll returns for the Crown up to 1352,[1] when the community take them at farm along with the profits of the borough courts and markets (*q.v.*).

The rural economy of the adjoining commotes was too entirely self-sufficing to afford much scope for purely commercial traffic in the borough port. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries its activity was mostly connected with the adequate supply of the castle and town garrisons. Some of the townsmen found occasional employment in removing and carrying goods from the harbour to the castle. A striking feature of the port of Carnarvon during the Middle Ages is its political importance; its commercial activity as such was inconsiderable. It was not until the development of the slate quarries within its market district that the port made rapid strides as a factor in British commerce. During the mediæval period the commercial wealth of the Carnarvonshire quarries was little exploited. The old borough retained its mediæval traits until this became a realised fact.

2. Conway

(*a*) *Agriculture.*—The lands allotted to the borough of Conway, though less considerable than those of Carnarvon, were evidently better fitted for the practice of agriculture. The burgages of the borough covered a ground area nearly double that of Carnarvon, and much of the intra-mural territory was taken up with extensive gardens. The average rents of the town lands ranged from two pence to three pence per acre. On an adjoining mountain, called 'Mynydd Dra,' the inhabitants enjoyed common grazing rights for their live stock.[2]

The town mills at Giffyn were unfortunately burnt by Madoc ap Llywelyn and his followers in 1294. They were still in a ruinous state in 1307,[3] but some time before 1316 they had been rebuilt. Two mills at Giffyn, with the site of another mill near the castle, were included among the premises granted to the burgesses at a fee-farm rent in this year. These mills proved the most important and profitable asset of their burghal prosperity. A late account of the local milling industry, the only one of its kind, shows the total profits for the twenty-third year of Henry viii. to have been £35. 7s. 4d.[4] One of the mills

[1] For details see Appendix (list of tolls). [2] *Parl. Papers*, 1838, vol. xxxv.
[3] *Min. Acc.* 1170/5. [4] *History of Aberconway* (R. Williams), pp. 193-6.

had a malt-house attached to it,[1] the malting items being by far the most numerous in the returns of this year.

As at Carnarvon, corn was frequently imported into Conway during the Middle Ages. The burgesses were so impoverished in 1343 that they were unable to grant an aid to the Black Prince.[2] The town apparently suffered from the ravages of the Black Death. Owing to pestilences and other misfortunes, the church of Conway became so much decayed that the abbot and convent successfully petitioned to be released from their duty of furnishing two chaplains there.[3] The town again came in for severe treatment at the hands of the Welsh rebels in 1400. It was actually occupied by the Welsh for some time. A contemporary syllabus detailing the damage done at this time is, albeit, too sweeping. It is said that the rebels entirely burnt all the houses of the town of Conway, together with the bridges, gates, the local exchequer-house, and other offices of the King's ministers there. The total loss in this respect was estimated at about £500 sterling.[4] The borough made no returns during the first ten years of the reign of Henry IV., but in the next year only six burgages, said to have been destroyed by the rebels, lay vacant in the hands of the royal escheator. Two years later the borough had so far recovered that the bailiffs began to pay the full complement of their ordinary fee-farm rent.[5] During the revolt, individual burgesses were deprived of cattle, sheep, corn, and other personal property to the value of £1481, making the sum-total loss to the borough about £2000. The aggregate head of stock lost was somewhat less than that at Carnarvon. It is interesting to note that one English burgess had been deprived of three hundred good English sheep.

The Conway accounts during the reign of Henry V. show an almost complete recovery from the devastations of the previous reign. The town continued to prosper under the later Lancastrian and early Tudor kings. Some insignificant arrears appear during the earlier and later years of Henry VI.'s rule. From this point to the reign of Edward VI. the town bailiffs almost invariably presented a quit balance sheet.[6]

(*b*) *Industry.*—That Conway, like Carnarvon, contained a

[1] *History of Aberconway* (R. Williams), pp. 101-2.
[2] *Orig. Docts.* (*Arch. Camb.*, suppl. vol., 1877), p. cli.
[3] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1385-9, p. 237. [4] *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 6/38.
[5] *Min. Acc.* 1175/6-9. [6] *Ib.* (Conway), *temp.* Henry V. to Henry VIII.

promiscuous class of tradesmen, is evident from the following list of 'industrial men' appearing in the existing muniments [1] of the mediæval borough, namely, mercer, spicer, shearman, comber, skinner, glover, saddler, cobbler, tailor, smith, carpenter, gardener, shepherd, cornmonger, brewer, taverner, fisherman, baker, cooper, *cantour*, goldsmith, and porter. The bailiff list for this period contains but a very few representatives of the minor artisan class. The bailiffs were drawn chiefly from the territorial and merchant class, a class described later as 'the gentlemen of Conway.' [2]

The tanning industry, as may be inferred from the occasional references to Conway skinners and others engaged in the occupation, evidently prospered on a small scale in the suburbs of the borough. One Ieuan, described as of 'ye wall of Conway,' in addition to losing a hundred beasts at the time of Glyndwr's rebellion, was also robbed of two thousand four hundred rabbit skins that were stored in a *bark-house* there.[3]

The famous pearl fishery of the river Conway is said later [4] to have occupied the attention of several of the poor fishermen of the town with remunerative results. We lack authentic data for its mediæval condition.

Brewing was carried on to a larger extent at Conway than perhaps at any of the other North Welsh boroughs. Aberconway beer became notorious for its badness. An old Welsh adage has it: 'Cwrw Aberconwy gorau pei bellaf'—the ale of Aberconway the farther the better.[5]

(*c*) *The Local Ferry.*—The local passage across the Conway near the town, as well as another passage at Tal y Cavn, four miles up the same river, produced good profits. Both remained royal property up to a modern date. The issues were generally farmed of the Crown by different individuals, often burgesses of the town of Conway.[6] They were seldom farmed by the community of the town, as a statement in Williams's *History of the Aberconway* [7] would lead us to suppose. We have one instance

[1] *Rentals and Surveys* (*temp.* Edward I.); *Court Rolls* (Edward III.); *Min. Acc.* (*passim* Edward I. to Henry VIII.).
[2] *History of the Gwydir Family* (Wynne, 1878 edition), p. 72.
[3] *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 6/38. [4] S. Lewis, *Top. Dic.*, *s.n.*
[5] Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
[6] See *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1307-13, p. 45; *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 7/11, 8/28; *Min. Acc.* (co. Carnarvon *passim*), *s.v.* Penlassok.
[7] P. 49. The burgesses once sought a grant of the ferry at fee-farm, but never received it.

of this in 1475, when the above ferries were farmed to the community for a term of ten years.[1] On the expiration of the lease the ferries were again farmed to an individual.

The particulars of a law-suit [2] in the reign of Richard II., touching the right to the issues of the ferry of Conway, supply a brief table of the actual tolls charged there. They are as follows :—for each person crossing, ¼d. ; for every man and horse, ½d. ; for every man, horse, and load, 1d. The amount of the farm derived by the Crown from the amalgamated issues of both ferries varied from £7 to £13.

The town ferry thus, at very rare intervals, formed a source of revenue to the local corporation. Its importance ceased with the erection of the modern bridge. The fermor at the date of its construction was indemnified for the loss sustained.[3]

(*d*) *Markets and Fairs.*—There are no extant charters warranting the holding of markets and fairs at Conway. Yet the burgesses maintained that Edward I. solemnly enjoined the men of the surrounding commotes of Creuddyn, Issaph, Ughaph, and Nantconway to bring their corn and other victuals, together with their live stock, to the established markets and fairs of Conway. The inhabitants of these districts were to contract bargains on the mountains no longer.[4]

A weekly market, every Tuesday, and an annual fair on the morrow of St. Martin's, had been established at Deganwy (Gannow) by Henry III.[4] On the demolition of the castle of Deganwy by Llywelyn in 1260, the borough, of which the above were the chief commercial features, apparently ceased to flourish. The old town was included within the liberties of the new borough of Conway, several of the inhabitants taking up burgages

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1181/6.

[2] *Plea Rolls* (Carnarvon), No. 1, m. 28. *Alexander de Salbury* v. *Richard Godynegh.* Thomas Benesheph received a grant of the ferry for term of life of Edward, Prince of Wales (*i.e.* the Black Prince), and transferred his interest to one John de Scolehall, who in turn vested the same in Henry de Salbury, the plaintiff's father. Alexander de Salbury was ejected *vi et armis* by Richard Godynegh 4th October 1388, who continued to take the profits of the ferry up to 24th March 1395, when the suit was commenced. Alexander estimated his damages at £40. Godynegh based his right of entry upon a lease (six years) of the ferry to him by one Mathew de Swetenham, who held the same of Anne, Queen of England, as parcel of the commote of Issaph (see *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1381-5, p. 159). It was also submitted that the exchanges from Benesheph to Salbury were without the Prince's licence. Verdict given for Alexander de Salbury with £12 damages, and Richard Godynegh fined 3s. 4d. for trespass.

[3] Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 111, 135.

[4] For authorities see tabular list of markets and fairs above.

there. Though dependent on the borough of Conway, the vill of Gannow maintained a separate existence, with its own inhabitants, and distinct markets and fairs. Early in the reign of Edward II. there were twenty-nine inhabited 'places' there, each realising a yearly rent of six pence.[1] A weekly market was held every Monday, which, judging from the toll returns of the years 1300-14, was as prosperous as that of Conway, if not, indeed, more so.[2] One of the two yearly fairs of the borough of Conway was held at Gannow, namely, that of the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude (29th October). The average tolls amounted to somewhat less than a third of those taken at Conway during the fair of St. Bartholomew. The local bailiffs return separate details of the markets of Conway and Gannow, until all particulars are finally lost in the fee-farm rent. An incidental reference late in the fifteenth century to the 'market of the ferry' there, referring presumably to Gannow, points to the late continuance of a dual mart.[3]

The early accounts of Conway supply some details concerning the methods of trading within the town. As early as 1306 there were nine hired shops in the *forum*. Two more were built in 1310, together with several shambles or stalls for the convenience of traders. Beyond the walls of the town, as at Carnarvon, were situated a score or more 'places,' and a few houses on 'Twthill.' Some of these were inhabited, others were employed as store-houses. In conjunction with additional 'places on the ferry' these seemingly constituted the nucleus of the borough suburbs.[4]

The particular issues of the local mart are, of course, not known after 1316, the year of its fee-farm charter. Its success was obviously affected by the extension of market privileges to the vill of Aber in the commote of Ughaph. Its nominal monopoly of the market district as mapped out by Edward I. was further diminished by the growing importance of the little town-villages of Trefriw and Llanrwst, where the inhabitants of the commote of Nantconway found it most convenient to transact their ordinary business. The trading tolls of the latter district are separately farmed during the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV. at a rent of about eleven shillings per annum.[5]

The general character of the trading activity of Conway,

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1170/4.
[2] See list of tolls, Appendix, below.
[3] *Min. Acc.* 1181/8.
[4] *Ib.*, 1170/4-9.
[5] *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 7/17, 8/28.

with due prominence to its market for corn, was much the same as that of the other North Welsh boroughs. Corn tolls continued to be collected by the local sergeants-at-mace to a very late date. The September fair there became noted for its supply of honey, drawn from the neighbouring glens.[1]

(*e*) *The Local Port.*—The port of Conway as an avenue of external trade was of little importance during the Middle Ages. Its local activity was concerned with the native coasting trade and the occasional call of fishing-boats engaged in the herring fisheries. *Kiltoll* customs were collected there, as at Carnarvon and Beaumaris.[2] These issues were apparently parallel to the anchorage dues taken by the water-bailiff there during the modern corporation period.[3]

3. Criccieth

The borough of Criccieth was the smallest of the Carnarvonshire boroughs, and possessed no port to facilitate its victualling. The burgesses were mostly dependent on local resources for their sustenance. Their borough lands, scanty at best, were moreover of a pastoral character, the rent per acre being a penny. The number of the town inhabitants during the Middle Ages never perhaps reached three figures, except when the castle was abnormally garrisoned. In 1294 the castle garrison comprised the majority of the inhabitants. A contemporary census return[4] gives the number of soldiers at twenty-eight, besides the constable. The burgesses proper numbered nine only, three of whom subsequently left. There were also thirteen women and nineteen children (*pueri*), making a sum-total of seventy-one. The unusually large garrison is explained by the revolt of Madoc ap Llywelyn, which reached its climax during the year 1294. On the fall of Madoc most of the garrison soldiers withdrew, but some stayed on as burgesses of the town of Criccieth. The number of burgages at Criccieth, all told, amounted to less than twenty-six, and more than one burgage frequently fell into the same hands. The burgesses proper of mediæval Criccieth would number about a round score.

[1] Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 89. English and Spanish honey was also imported there.

[2] See list of tolls, Appendix, below.

[3] *Parl. Papers*, 1838, vol. xxxv.

[4] *Exchqr. K.R. Acc.* 5/18, m. 15.

A grist mill was situated within the borough franchise, but the burgesses never farmed it.[1] The weekly market of the borough was held every Thursday, to which the men of the adjoining commote of Eivionydd were constrained to come by ordinance. Until the reign of Henry IV. the constable of the castle, for the purposes of his garrison, exercised a right of pre-emption over all goods and merchandise brought there. The market tolls in 1310 were a little over seven shillings; in 1326 they only amounted to ten pence! The great fluctuations in the market issues of English boroughs in Wales during the reigns of the first three Edwards are explicable only on political grounds. Two annual fairs were held at Criccieth during the evangelical feasts of St. Mark and St. Luke respectively. A chronological table of the available toll issues is appended below. It is somewhat noteworthy that no tolls were returned during the fair of St. Mark in 1339, for the reason that a fair was held at Bangor on the same day.[2] The bailiffs evidently made a special point of this, in order to remind the Crown of its departure from the tenor of its ancient institutes confining trade to the English vills.

The reign of Richard II. was a comparatively prosperous one for Criccieth, the farm of the incidental profits of the local mart and courts reaching its highest point during this time.[3] The troubles of the succeeding reign, however, reduced it to the position of an ordinary Welsh village. It no longer ranked as a typical garrison vill, but continued to exercise, though irregularly, the customs and privileges of a free borough. The native Welsh of the peculiarly lawless district of Eivionydd, even as early as 1337, had usurped many of the English liberties.[4] Welsh interests, here as elsewhere, gradually gained the upper hand with the decay of the borough as a factor in the English policy of defence.

There is nothing distinctively English about Criccieth after the reign of Henry IV. Under Henry V. the town gradually recovered from the devastation of the Welsh rebels,[5] and enjoyed

[1] *A.O. Misc. Bk.* (P.R.O.), No. 166, f. xix.

[2] *Min. Acc.* 1171/4: 'nil eo quod dominus Rex concessit de novo Episcopo Bangorensi nundinas apud Bangor' eodem die!'

[3] See Appendix.

[4] *E.g.* mandate to Richard de Holland, constable of the castle of Criccieth, to take into the King's hand three burgages held by Kevenerth ap Partha, Madoc Gogh, and Ieuan Gogh, because they are Welshmen (*Add. MS.*, 33,372, f. 6*a*).

[5] No returns were made for the borough *temp.* Henry IV.

a precarious existence under Henry VI. and Edward IV. During these reigns the borough courts were irregularly held, the market and fair tolls were carelessly collected, and arrears in the payment of the royal rent frequently appear—all symptoms of a struggle, and sufficient to show that the inhabitants, like their descendants of the early nineteenth century, were not very well off. There were practically no toll returns made after the reign of Edward IV., due perhaps in part to the racial sympathy that existed between the inhabitants of town and country. Under Henry VII. and Henry VIII. the bailiffs are quit every year for the rents of the town lands, and a compound fee of eight shillings in respect of court and market issues. In one account during this period the perquisites of the court are estimated at 7s. 6d., and the tolls as *nil*.[1]

Obviously the inhabitants were mainly engaged in agricultural operations. There are no indications of any industrial and commercial activity beyond what may be inferred from the occasional mention of mercers, tailors, bakers, and smiths among the town populace. In the early part of the nineteenth century Criccieth is described as a pleasant fishing village, with no commerce except the herring fishery.[2] It evidently maintained its mediæval economic character until its comparatively modern development as a little avenue of external trade and a popular seaside resort.

4. Nevin

The lands pertaining to the maenor of Nevin have been already described. A return [3] made to an early subsidy levied in 1287 throws interesting light on the social status of the inhabitants of Nevin before the enfranchisement of the vill. It contains a list of about ninety-three persons, whose wealth, as might be expected, consisted chiefly of agricultural stock. To take a typical entry, we find the goods and chattels of one David ap Madoc to be: 5 oxen (valued at 25s.), 1 horse (5s.), 8 cows (26s. 8d.), 10 sheep (5s.), 4 crannocks of mancorn (8s.), 2 nets (4s.), other articles (*in mercaturiis* 10s.). Total £4. 3s. 8d. The document bears out the recognised character of Nevin as a fishing village of old repute. Forty of the tenants mentioned

[1] *Min. Acc.* (co. Carnarvon), *s.n.* Criccieth, *temp. cit.*
[2] Lewis, *Top. Dict. of Wales*, *s.n.*
[3] *Lay Subsidies* (P.R.O.), No. 242/50.

in the return possessed a total of sixty-three fishing nets, all valued at two shillings each. Some tenants were furnished with skiffs (*scaphæ*) and boats for fishing purposes. Three of the inhabitants appear with nets only. The good times at Nevin at this period were evidently concurrent with the successful fishing seasons. The professional and artisan elements of the town populace in 1287 are represented by a smith, goldsmith, clerk, dealer (*porthmon*), and a *gwestwr* or taverner.

The borough remained typically the same throughout our period. No drastic change took place, except that the vill was much decayed during Glyndwr's revolt.[1] The predominant occupation was a composite one. The burgess shared the duties of farmer and fisherman. The larger farmers had an interest in boats, and the smaller fishermen were dependent upon the town lands. It was on the borough common that the latter grazed their paltry flocks of sheep and found most of their fuel.[2] The commercial activity of the borough included a weekly market, held every Saturday, for the inhabitants of the commote of Dynllaen. Two yearly fairs were also held at Whitsuntide and the feast of the Assumption of Holy Mary (15th August) respectively.[3] The town was fortunate in possessing a good natural harbour, invaluable to the prosperity of the local fishing industry, and also attractive to merchant-ships that occasionally called with shop goods.

The economic condition of Nevin in the time of Charles I. presents no great contrast to what it was in the reign of the first Edward. One of the witnesses in the well-known inquiry instituted in 1635,[4] touching the fee-farm charter of the borough, deposed that most of the freeholders of Nevin got the greatest part of their living by fishing, but if they lost their houses and lands (as was then threatened), he verily believed that they could have no means to subsist or maintain themselves, but would be forced to go a-begging. At this particular date the number of the Nevin freeholders was about sixty, twenty-six residing in the town and the rest within the franchise.

[1] The borough paid no rent during the reign of Henry IV. (*Min. Acc.* 1175/7-9).

[2] Cf. *Parl. Papers*, 1838, vol. xxxv.

[3] See tabular analysis of markets and fairs above for authorities, and Appendix below for toll returns.

[4] *Exchqr. Depositions*, 11, Car. i., No. 31.

5. Pwllheli

The mediæval borough of Pwllheli bears a striking resemblance to that of Nevin. A parallel and contemporary subsidy return[1] shows the economic status of Pwllheli to be that of Nevin on a smaller scale. The community were primarily engaged in agriculture, and some of the inhabitants were engaged in the fishing industry. The town at a later date became celebrated for its whiting,[2] but at the particular date of the above subsidy the local fisheries were not considerably developed, only eight of the twenty-one inhabitants mentioned possessing fishing nets. The town maintained its purely agricultural character right down to the later Tudor period (32 Elizabeth). At this time the town lands are described as being of direct concern to the living of men, women, and children there, to the number of two or three hundred.[3]

Weekly markets were held every Sunday for the use of the inhabitants of the commote of Gafflogion, and two fairs were annually kept there in the months of September and November respectively.[4] The holding of two autumn fairs was perhaps consonant with the pastoral economy of the immediate vicinity. The port served the townsmen in their herring and whiting fisheries, and was comparatively a more popular port of call for merchant ships than Nevin.

In conjunction with the other smaller boroughs of North Wales, the bailiffs of Pwllheli made no return during the reign of Henry iv. and the early years of Henry v.'s rule. The accounts of the town fermors under Henry vi. and Edward iv. show considerable arrears for several years. Arrears are exceptional in the subsequent and more settled reigns of Henry vii. and Henry viii.[5]

6. Bala

The inhabitants of mediæval Bala were few. They were chiefly occupied in agricultural and pastoral pursuits. Some of the townsmen concurrently farmed the grinding mills of Pennaran and Bala. The latter mill was entirely destroyed by a storm towards the end of the fourteenth century (*circa* 17-19 Richard ii.). It next appears in the reign of Henry v. pro-

[1] *Lay Subsidy* 242/50. [2] *Parl. Papers*, 1838, vol. xxxv.
[3] *Exchqr. Special Commissions*, 32 Elizabeth, No. 3381.
[4] For authorities and tolls see preceding page, n. 3.
[5] *Min. Acc.* (co. Carnarvon), *s.n.* Pwllheli, *temp. cit.*

ducing a yearly rent of £4. It continued to realise this amount until 1446, when one Meredith ap Hoell ap Tudor farmed the issues at 11s. 8d. The mill returns no profits after the year 1473, when it apparently fell into decay. The mill is described in 1532 as being in decay for many years past.[1]

One looks in vain for the early origins of the knitting and woollen industry for which the town became famous during the sixteenth and following centuries.

The mediæval town, like its modern prototype, furnished the central mart for the district of Penllyn. Markets were held every Saturday, and very successful fairs were kept in the early May and late June of each year.[2] The district surrounding the borough consisted chiefly of pastoral lands. Cattle, sheep, cheeses, and butter were the prime productions.[3] It was from the tolls issuing from the sale of these articles that the burgesses made the most considerable portion of their fee-farm. Bala was one of the foremost marts in North Wales. It paid more to the Crown in respect of commercial tolls than it did for rents of land. When Henry VII. generously remitted the payment of tolls to his North Welsh subjects, the burgesses of Bala represented to the King that the bulk of their farm was made up of tolls, stallage, and other customs taken from persons trading there.[4] They were subsequently pardoned more than half their usual farm in respect of the concession.

As far as the general condition of the borough is concerned, Bala exhibits the same symptoms of decay during the period intervening between the reigns of Henry V. and Richard III. as Nevin; it likewise presents similar indications of success as does Pwllheli during the Tudor period.[5]

7. Harlech

Early in the nineteenth century Harlech is described as a very poor town, remarkable only for its castle. This was its general character throughout the Middle Ages. Mediæval Harlech, like Criccieth, was comparatively small. The inhabitants occupied themselves with the cultivation of their lands, and the direction of the trading transactions of the

[1] *Min. Acc., s.a.c.* [2] Pp. 171, 198 (n. 3) above.
[3] Cf. *Court Rolls* (P.R.O.), portf. 227/28, 33. See Beaufort's *Progress*, 1684 (ed. C. W. Banks), p. 152, for a view of Bala at this date.
[4] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 9093.
[5] *Min. Acc.* (cos. Carnarvon and Merioneth).

extensive commote of Ardudwy. They also supplemented the amount of their fee-farm rent by the profits of the royal mills situated in the same commote.

A contemporary list [1] of the inhabitants of Harlech during the eventful year of 1294 supplies valuable details of the local populace at this time. Twenty soldiers had been stationed there at Michaelmas under Robert de Staundon, and seven more were brought there by John de Havering during the feast of St. Luke. The castle, in addition, contained seven women, four infants, and three 'boys' (*garciones*). The men or inhabitants of the town numbered eleven men (three bearing Welsh names), twelve women, and twenty-one children (*pueri*). Harlech during the year of Madoc's revolt would thus appear to have contained a population of a little more than eighty souls, the castle claiming about half the number. The service which they rendered to the English cause during this year has been already told in a previous chapter.

The weekly market was held on Saturday, and two yearly fairs were held at Midsummer and Martinmas respectively.[2] It was on the issues of these that the burgesses mainly depended for the realisation of any surplus profits over and above the fixed amount of their fee-farm rent. The early townsmen experienced some difficulty in making both ends meet. In 1329 they emphasised the hardness of their position by stating that they were situated on a rock, whence no material advantage accrued either to the town or castle inhabitants. In extenuation of their poverty, the poor burgesses at this time sought a grant of two additional fairs every year, one to be held on Thursday in Trinity week, and one in the middle of August.[3] This request was granted them six years later (1335).[4]

Throughout the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II. the borough maintained its normal condition,[5] though it is said that the castle garrison suffered from the ravages of the Black Death.[6] The reign of Henry IV. proved disastrous to the borough of Harlech. Forty-six houses in the town were burnt down by the rebels, and household goods, bed-clothes, vessels, etc., to the value of five hundred marks were destroyed. It is evident from

[1] *Exchqr. K.R. Acc.* 5/18, m. 16.
[2] Pp. 171, 198 (n. 3) above.
[3] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 8001. Cf. *Rot. Parl.*, ii. p. 28*b*.
[4] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 292-3.
[5] *Min. Acc.*, temp. cit.
[6] Williams's *Aberconway*, p. 38 (? authority).

other items of losses sustained, that the wealth of the inhabitants lay chiefly in the number of their several herds and flocks. Several burgesses, all bearing English names, suffered considerably in respect of loss of stock. One John Collier, a member of a most prominent family at Harlech during its early history, was deprived of 165 head of cattle, 40 horses, 100 sheep, and 100 goats, together with other goods to the value of £40. John's brother, Vivian, was deprived of 40 cattle, and five other burgesses of a total of more than 150 beasts. The total loss to Harlech, in respect of property burnt and goods destroyed, amounted to about £540.[1]

The bailiffs' returns for the subsequent reigns of Henry v. and Henry vi. show the gradual recovery of the borough to its normal condition as during the greater part of the fourteenth century. The town comes to be charged with its orignal rent of £22 in 1446, the first time since the close of the reign of Richard ii. The closing years of the reign of Henry vi. and that of Edward iv. were fraught with further trouble for Harlech, but from the twentieth year of Edward iv. to the first year of Edward vi. the burgesses invariably return the full complement of their farm. This latter fact seemingly points to a period of comparative prosperity.[2]

Beyond its being the centre of local trade in the commote of Ardudwy, there is nothing to show that Harlech ever became, or even aspired to be, a centre of commercial importance. Some entries in the early Close Rolls of the fourteenth century point to Harlech as being a port of some note. On May the 10th, 1324, the mayor and bailiffs of Harlech (*Hardelawe*), among others, were formally ordered to arrest all ships of forty tons and upwards in their port for the King's use.[3] Similar orders appear on the same rolls for the years 1326, 1321, and 1331, Hardelawe in these particular instances being the only North Welsh port mentioned.[4]

[1] *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 6/38. [2] *Min. Acc.* (co. Merioneth), *temp. cit.*
[3] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1323-7, p. 183.
[4] *Ib., s.a.c.* The absence of the more important ports of North Wales, and the close connection of Hardelawe with the port of Poole (co. Dorset) in these instances, lends some suspicion to the identification of Hardelawe with Harlech. The fact that the Close Rolls' lists of ports, etc., have no pretence to geographical order, and that the form Hardelawe, in one instance at least, is used to represent the castle of Harlech, confirms the identification. It is, however, curious that we have no incidental notices to merchant-ships calling at the port during the Middle Ages.

In 1342 the port is again specified as a possible port of passage to lands beyond the sea.[1]

8. Beaumaris

(*a*) *Agriculture.*—The extensive lands allotted to the use of the burgesses were admirably adapted for the purposes of agriculture, as are almost all Anglesea lands by common repute. The burgesses, as we have already seen from their attempts to secure a compact territory, were particularly interested in their crops. Out of a total of eighty-three tenants enumerated in the earliest rental of the town, as many as fifty-two held plots of land in addition to their burgage tenements.[2]

It is strange, in view of its agricultural possibilities, that the community of Beaumaris, like that of Conway, did not farm the mills that were situated within their franchise. There were three mills within the liberty of the town. One was a private one, erected by Anian ap Ieuan, a prominent burgess there during the first half of the fourteenth century. He obtained a licence (10th December 1327) to erect a windmill on the 'Milnehill' by Beaumaris, paying to the Crown as heretofore six pence yearly as ground rent.[3] The royal mills of Llanvaes and Kevencogh, sometimes described as being situate within the lordship of Beaumaris, were generally leased to divers individuals at a rent amounting to a little less than £5 yearly.[4] They never fell into the hands of the town community, as was the case at Conway, with profitable results. Three millers appear in the oldest list of Beaumaris burgesses.

The town retained its agricultural character in gradually diminishing proportions to a comparatively late date. There were twenty-seven families wholly occupied in agriculture at the beginning of the last century.[5] The decay was the inevitable result of the gradual rise of Beaumaris as a place of trade. During the Middle Ages the change is not very noticeable, but the expansion of commerce during the Tudor period and later, together with the policy of the close corporation, established under Elizabeth, soon revolutionised the economic character of the town. There are no noteworthy incidents in its agricultural history during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, save the

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1341-3, p. 485.
[2] For authorities see above, ch. iv., *s.n.* Beaumaris.
[3] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1327-30, p. 194.
[4] Cf. *ib.*, 1461-7, p. 382.
[5] *Parl. Papers*, 1835 (26), *s.n.*

temporary destruction of the houses and lands during the revolt of Glyndwr, and other occasional depredations caused by the sea on the foreshore lands of the liberty.[1] Glyndwr and his associates set fire to ten or more houses in the borough, entirely destroying them, and agricultural lands to the yearly value of nearly £7 were rendered unfit for cultivation for many years. The rebels also captured goods and chattels of the local burgesses in large quantities, making the total damage to the borough about two thousand marks.[2] The town did not recover from the blow it then received until the early years of the reign of Henry VI., when the decayed lands were again arrented. Though occasionally disturbed and menaced by pirates during the late fifteenth century, the state of the borough accounts down to the Act of Union points to a period of increasing prosperity.[3]

(*b*) *Industry.*—The names of the industrial and professional burgesses comprise the usual mixed lot—mercers, skinners, bakers, tailors, butchers, and smiths.

There are no indications of any typical industry flourishing on an elaborate scale. Some prominence was, however, given to the development of the local fisheries towards the middle of the fifteenth century. The local port had been closely associated with the herring trade from a very early date, but in the year 1439 one Thomas Norreys for the first time farmed a piscary, extending from the 'lymeculne' below the town of Beaumaris to the 'Fferyman Warth,' for a term of twenty years at a rent of six pence per annum. Nine years later another Thomas, surnamed Shirewyn, farmed a fishery on the seashore, extending from Thomas Norreys' weir to the house of the Friars Minor of Llanvaes, on exactly similar terms. In 1460 both these fisheries were vacant; no one, it is said, wished to arrent them. In the meantime, about 1451, one David ap Ieuan Tutwhele leased a certain piece of land on the foreshore, extending from 'Osemondseir' to 'Acrevaile below the Britarye' (one 'mere' of the liberty of Beaumaris), for a term of forty years at the small rent of four pence per annum. The 'limekiln' fishery was arrented to William Bulkeley in 1473 for twenty-four years at six pence, and remained in the hands of the Bulkeley family to the close of the reign of Henry VIII. at a slightly increased rate. The terms of a twenty-one years' lease of the same piscary granted to Richard

[1] E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1150/8, 1151/2.
[2] *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 6/38.
[3] *Min. Acc.*, Henry VI. to VIII.

Bulkeley in 1518, stipulated the payment of an annual rent of twelve pence. The fishery extending to the house of the Friars Minor remained vacant until the year 1514, when William Hardyn and others began to arrent it for six pence yearly, and so on to the close of Henry VIII.'s rule. The 'Osemondseir' fishery produced a rent of five pence yearly during the years 1493-1545; in the latter year it was let at six pence.[1] There is nothing to illustrate what profits were made by the private individuals who periodically farmed these Beaumaris fisheries. The continued payment of the royal rents points to the existence of a remunerative industry.

(*c*) *The Local Ferry.*—The royal boat plying on the local ferry across the Lavan Sands between Beaumaris and Aber was usually farmed either by the town community or by individual burgesses during the reign of Edward II. The boat was damaged by a storm in 1306, and during the next four years the burgesses took on the responsibility of repairing it at their own cost. Up to Easter 1325 they paid an annual rent of thirty shillings, at which date the boat was again shattered by a fierce gale. Another royal boat was provided in the next year,[2] which the burgesses farmed at the old rate. During the years 25-30 Edward III. the farm of the passage falls to 20s., 'because no more could be got,' and in the next year (31 Edward III.) it actually fell to sixteen shillings. One Griffith Bron subsequently rented it at a farm of 26s. 8d. for a few years up to 34 Edward III., when the town community compounded with the Crown to pay a round sum in lieu of the profits of the passage and other royal issues of the borough.[3] After this the burgesses had to provide and maintain their own ferry-boat, and by virtue of their charter of incorporation in the time of Elizabeth, the legal ownership of the ferry was vested in the corporation.

(*d*) *Markets and Fairs.*—The local market, held every Wednesday, was established for the wide district covered by the neighbouring commotes of Dyndaethwy, Twrcelyn, and Talybolion. Spring and autumn fairs were also held every year. The details of the market and fair tolls taken there during the early years of Edward II.'s reign, and again for some years towards the close of Edward III.'s reign, are extant.[4] The market tolls in 1305

[1] *Min. Acc.* (Anglesea), *s.a.c.* [2] Cf. *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1323-7, p. 304.
[3] *Min. Acc.* (Anglesea), *s.a.c.*, and p. 133 above.
[4] Pp. 171, 198 (n. 3) above.

amounted to fourteen shillings, and during the period 1339-58 they varied from 1s. 6d. to 4s. 4d. Evidently, as the contemporary court rolls [1] attest, several of the rural folk persisted in selling their corn, cattle, sheep, pigs, cloth, butter, and cheese outside the forum (*extra forum*) of Beaumaris. It was about this time that the Black Prince ordered a more strict observance of the trade ordinances drawn up by his ancestor, Edward I. The toll returns from 1360 onwards are coupled with the issues of the borough courts (*q.v.*) in a general farm. In all the specified instances, the tolls of the September fair are from four to six times the amount of those taken in the spring fair. This apparently points to the selling of the surplus stock before the winter keep—one of the essential features of good farming during the Middle Ages. It was during the progress of this fair for three days in each year, that the Crown overruled the rights of the Bishop of Bangor to the ferry tolls of the passage of Porthesgob.[2]

(*e*) *The Local Port.*—The port of Beaumaris was by far the most active of the North Welsh ports during the Middle Ages. It afforded good anchorage and safe shelter during the severest gales, and in addition to being a favourite port of call in the local fishing and coasting trade, it was a port of considerable importance in the external trade of the North Welsh Principality. There were more merchants at Beaumaris than in any other borough of North Wales.

The burgesses took a special interest in their commercial prospects. Edward I. enacted that all ships nearing the coastline of Anglesea should call at Beaumaris, and there display their goods and merchandise for sale, *and not elsewhere*.[3] Early in the next reign the burgesses informed the Crown that, owing to the want of a good quay, several merchants withdrew from their port,[4] and called in preference at the minor ports of Mathavarn and Dulas in the same island.[5] Improvements were subsequently made for the accommodation of merchant and other ships, with the result that the port gradually developed into a commercial centre of more than ordinary importance. Its local activity was connected in one instance with the distribution of provisions and other stores for the sufficient victualling of the

[1] *Court Rolls*, 215/4, 5.
[2] See *Min. Acc.* 1227/3.
[3] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 223.
[4] *Ib.*, and *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13,991.
[5] *Min. Acc.* 1227/3-8, 1229/1-3.

North Welsh castles. Goods left at Beaumaris by Chester merchants and others were despatched by local carriers to Carnarvon, Conway, and other castles.[1] An early table of the tolls chargeable in the port of Beaumaris further shows the importance of the town to the native fishermen. Beaumaris was evidently the favourite port of call. The earliest account in which the detailed customs appear belongs to the year 1355.[2] Of every five meases of herrings brought into the port, the King received a penny toll. The royal revenue issuing from this source averaged about ten shillings per annum. Of every herring fishing-boat entering or going out of the port of Beaumaris the King took a custom of one mease of herrings. Each mease was valued at two shillings, and the royal profits in this respect amounted to about seventeen shillings a year. Among other customs charged was a kiltoll or anchorage toll of four pence on every boat, and eight pence on every ship, calling at the port. Some merchants claimed exemption from these dues by virtue of their town charters. In 1355 the bailiffs of Beaumaris were ordered to make transcripts of all charters presented by merchants claiming this privilege. The detailed customs arising from these sources in the local port between the years 1332-58 are available.[3] They were subsequently amalgamated with other incidental profits of the borough.[4]

The commercial importance of the port in its relation to the external trade of the Principality is examined below. Pennant, writing of Beaumaris in the eighteenth century, states, ' the town has no trading of any kind, yet has its custom-house.' It was at Beaumaris that the royal customs were mostly collected during the Middle Ages.

9. Newborough

Newborough remains a typical manorial borough throughout its history. The low-lying lands of the Meney were most suitable for the growing of corn and the feeding of cattle. The fact of their situation, however, on the border of the extensive sea-marshes of Malldraeth often proved a source of danger. The inhabitants experienced a permanent loss in this respect in the fatal year of 1331, when a considerable extent of their lands was overrun by the moving sands.[5] In the reign of Elizabeth

[1] E.g. *Min. Acc.* 1211/7, 1213/10.
[2] *Ib.*, 1149/1.
[3] For list see Appendix below.
[4] P. 133 above.
[5] See above, ch. iv., *s.n.* Newborough.

the Crown countenanced similar complaints from the burgesses of Newborough. By way of respite, it had been the custom to forbid the cutting of 'moreske' rushes within two miles of the borough.[1] These sea-reeds afforded some protection to the town, and also furnished material for such industry as thrived there.

The peaty character of the surrounding marshes supplied the inhabitants with plenty of turf for fuel. The sea-rushes (*cupæ marinæ*) found there were also turned to good purpose, being utilised in the local industry of mat, net, rope, and cord making.[2] Newborough reeds were sometimes strewn (in place of carpet) on the floors of the local exchequer at Carnarvon at the coming of the justice and the auditors.[3]

The borough posed as the central mart for the local tenants of the commote of Meney. The market was held on Tuesday in each week, and the two yearly fairs took place at Midsummer and Martinmas. The market tolls during the year 1304 amounted to 59s. 3d. The annual fair tolls generally averaged about £2. Newborough attained some degree of distinction in respect of its ox market,[4] being almost first among all the fairs of Wales for the number and breed of its cattle. In 1460 the total market and fair tolls realised only 14s. 8d. Apparently the Welsh were partially exercising what they received later as a privilege from Henry VII., namely, exemption from the payment of tolls.

The borough seems to have reached the hey-day of its prosperity during the fourteenth century, when the Crown almost invariably enjoyed an annual rent varying from £30 to £36. Early in the reign of Henry IV. several tenements and divers lands of the borough were burnt by the Welsh rebels. Even as late as 1410 there were lands to the yearly value of £1. 12s. vacant in the hands of the Crown, and some burgages continued unoccupied during the reign of Henry V. The total rent during this latter reign varied from £20 to £27. 2s. It remained at the latter figure until 1468. In 1473, owing to some circumstance, it suddenly falls to £11. 13s. 4d., at which sum it remained to the end of the Tudor period. The apparent reason for the decline is the decay of the commercial and jurisdictional revenues of the borough. The quit balances of the lessees during the reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. show the comparative

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 298.
[2] *Parl. Papers*, 1835, vol. xxvi.
[3] *Min. Acc.* (North Wales), 26 and 28 Henry VIII.
[4] *Arch. Camb.*, I. i. p. 307.

prosperity of the borough during this period, though on a smaller and less elaborate scale.[1]

There can be no doubt but that the bulk of the Anglesea people preferred the more purely Welsh borough of Newborough to its English rival at Beaumaris. This may explain the large profits of its early fairs, as also the equally rapid decline of the later ones. During the reign of Henry VII., when things Welsh begin to flourish for the first time, the inhabitants of Anglesea were gratified with that clause of Henry's great charter, providing for the holding of all county courts in the town of Newborough. These courts were held here for a period of forty-five years, when they were again restored to Beaumaris as formerly. At the same time Newborough released itself from the joint liability of supporting a parliamentary representative for the Anglesea boroughs. After this date (2 Edward VI.) Newborough continued to exist as a kind of village, irregularly exercising some of its ancient privileges. A writer describes it in 1841 as the most miserable spot in Anglesea!

III

This concludes our particular survey of the local activities and occupations of the North Welsh boroughs. It now remains to see what part the same boroughs played in the external or exchange trade of the North Welsh Principality during the Middle Ages.

The conquest of Wales by Edward I. changed the material character of Welsh commerce only in so far as the new innovations led to the creation of new wants. The erection of castles and the foundation of boroughs gave a new impetus to the national trade. The immediate effects were perceptible in matters connected with the general administration of trade, such as the building of new quays and the election of customs officials. The prevailing character of North Welsh trade remained much the same throughout the Middle Ages. The port customs and harbour dues of the local ports are typically those of an agricultural society gradually emerging from a shell of a more primitive type. The exports of the purely pastoral district of Snowdon, as we should expect, were not great. The borough ports of North Wales during the Middle Ages knew nothing of the *industrial* impulse from which the commerce of

[1] *Min. Acc.* (Anglesea), *s.a.c.*

Modern Wales derives its importance. Their trade was actuated more by political than by economic considerations.[1]

The general features of the external trade of Wales during the mediæval period have been analysed elsewhere.[2] The extant facts illustrating the part played by the North Welsh boroughs are mostly preserved in the customs returns of the local ports. These afford figures giving some idea of the approximate bulk of the trade, and also contain some details as to the agents engaged. The patent and close rolls supply other useful information on these points.

Taking first the agents engaged, we find that these comprised local, English, Irish, and foreign merchants.

The founding of the North Welsh municipalities, with their gild merchant organisation, must naturally have given some impetus to the rise of a merchant class in North Wales. It is, however, only in the three towns of Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris, especially in the latter, that merchants flourished to any extent. The ports of these boroughs constituted the chief avenue of external trade in North Wales during the period 1284-1536. Their quays, as we have already remarked above, were frequently repaired by the Crown, and it is to them alone that trade legislation in North Wales [3] generally applied.

Native shipping developed very slowly. Royal boats and ships were often placed at the disposal of the burgesses to facilitate the victualling of their boroughs. For instance, two burgesses of Conway employed one of the King's barges for this purpose in 1284.[4] Again, in 1308 letters of protection were granted to a royal ship, called *Coga Sanctæ Mariæ de Coneweye*, to be employed on the King's business in home and foreign waters.[5] Three years later the burgesses of Conway were asked to supply a ship for the expedition that was then being formed against Robert Bruce, the same to be fully armed and provisioned for seven weeks.[6] Apparently some of the merchant burgesses of Conway possessed private ships of their own by this time. In 1316 letters of safe conduct were granted to Robert de Lughteburgh, a burgess of the town of Aberconway, going in his *little ship*, called *Le Mariot de Conwei*, to Ireland to buy corn for the King's towns and castles

[1] See p. 274 below.
[2] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. pp. 166-8.
[3] Cf. *Letters and Papers Henry VIII.*, vol. xiv., No. 802.
[4] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1281-92, p. 131.
[5] *Ib.*, 1307-13, p. 93.
[6] *Ib.*, pp. 352-3.

of Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris.[1] Ships from the ports of Conway, Chester, and Beaumaris were frequently requisitioned by the Crown during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries for the safe passage of the justiciar of Ireland.[2] Such orders seldom extended to Carnarvon, though in 1315 we read of the destruction of a ship, called *La James of Carnarvon*, by Scottish 'rebels' off Holyhead.[3] It is not until late in the reign of Henry VIII. that we can be sure that local ships were engaged in transmarine trade; the local merchants usually freighted their goods in foreign and other boats. Local merchants, excepting those of Beaumaris, played an insignificant part in the trade.

Up to the middle of the fifteenth century the merchant trade of North Wales was mostly the monopoly of Chester merchants. They often went with their merchandise and victuals to Ireland for purposes of sale, and returned with divers goods for the victualling of Chester and North Wales.[4] They also made it a custom to call periodically at the North Welsh ports on their return journeys from Gascony and other foreign ports.[5] A good sprinkling of Chester merchants almost invariably attended the more important fairs in North Wales. Their names frequently appear among those supplying necessaries for the local chancery and exchequer at Carnarvon.[6]

Liverpool merchants are said to have traded in Wales as early as 1317,[7] and those of Bristol and of other English ports, such as Fowey and Plymouth, we know, occasionally called with articles of food (corn and peas) grown in the western districts of England.

Irish merchants made periodical calls with their fish and corn.[8] The burgesses of Conway include Dublin and Drogheda among the towns, whence merchants were wont to visit their borough.[9] The burgesses of Beaumaris in one of their early petitions

[1] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1313-17, p. 439.
[2] E.g. *ib., s.a.*, 1377-81, p. 385; 1467-77, p. 524.
[3] *Ib.*, 1313-17, p. 421.
[4] See *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 1888. They express the object of their trading thus: 'Pour vitailler les chasteux leur dit seigneur le Prince comme pour le profit de la commune.'
[5] Cf. *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1318-23, p. 453.
[6] *Min. Acc.* (chamberlain, North Wales), *passim*.
[7] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1317-21, p. 8. For other Lancashire merchants see *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 6507; *Min. Acc.* 1211/17.
[8] *Ib.*, 1214/9.
[9] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 9365.

vaguely describe the merchants visiting their town as being of 'diverse lands.' [1]

Foreign ships (carrying wine and iron), mostly Breton, called at Beaumaris during the reign of Edward IV., and in increasing numbers during the Tudor period. These were mostly freighted by Beaumaris and Chester merchants, but sometimes foreign merchants brought ships and cargoes of their own.[2]

A general idea of the extent and administration of the trading activity carried on in North Wales by these different agencies may be gleaned from the scattered notices of the custom revenues during this period.

Butlers and gaugers of wine were appointed for North Wales early in the fourteenth century. The following appointments are recorded on the patent rolls (*s.a.c.*) during the early half of the fourteenth century:—

1308. Bernard de Fer, to be gauger of wines in the whole of Wales.

1316. Eynon Bagh, William Salmon of Beaumaris, to be Bernard's deputies in North Wales.

1316. William de Doncaster, to be deputy-butler of Henry de Say in Chester, Conway, Beaumaris, and Carnarvon.

1320. Anian ap Yevan of Beaumaris, to be deputy-butler of Stephen de Abyndon in Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris.

1327. John de Totenham, to be deputy of Richard de la Pole in Chester and all ports of Wales.

1329. Nicholas de Acton, to be deputy-butler of the above Richard in all the ports of North Wales.

1331. John de Housom, to be deputy-butler of Andrew Nicol in Chester, Carnarvon, and other ports of North Wales.

1339. Thomas de Upton, to be controller of customs in Carnarvon.

—— Nicholas de Ellerker, to hold the office of tronage of wools in the same town.

1343. Henry de Shaldeford, to be deputy-butler of Thomas de Colleye in North Wales.

A few customs returns for the closing years of the reign of Edward I. appear on the account of the local chamberlain of North Wales. During the period covered by the deputy-butlers

[1] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 13,991. [2] See p. 214 below, n. 4.

mentioned above, no extant particulars of the custom revenues are available. The customs taken in the North Welsh ports do not come under the purview of the local chamberlain until the latter half of the fourteenth century. After this, the customs were taken by special collectors, and made payable to the exchequer at Carnarvon. The chamberlain accounts of North Wales from this time to the close of the Tudor period give the custom revenues of the North Welsh ports. The original custom accounts have survived only in a few [1] instances during the reign of Henry VIII. They contain some details supplementary to the particulars given on the chamberlain's roll.

Prisage and gauge of wines were the only royal customs levied in North Wales up to the year 1339. Yet an inconsiderable trade in wool and other customable merchandise had been carried on there ever since the conquest, but there was apparently no fixed place for the collection of customs. In 1339, among other royal ordinances for the better regulation of North Wales, one stipulated that customs should henceforth be collected at Carnarvon. Coket seals were ordered, and special collectors were appointed. Thomas de Upton was nominally the first controller of the customs there.[2] It is known that the apparatus necessary for the exercise of this office never reached Carnarvon. About sixty years later the chamberlain states that a pair of balances, a beam, and six weights, destined for Carnarvon, still remained at Rhuddlan. The port of Carnarvon shows no profits from this source until the reign of Henry VII. Such North Welsh wools as were exported were mostly stapled at Rhuddlan. A few shipments of Welsh wool, subject to the conditions of the staple of Rhuddlan, were also made from the port of Beaumaris late in the fifteenth century, namely, two sacks and eight pounds, yielding a custom of fifteen shillings, in 1457, five sacks in 1466, and three sacks in 1468. The issues of the Rhuddlan staple were payable to the exchequer at Carnarvon.[3]

An analysis of the royal customs taken in the North Welsh ports shows them to be similar in character to those levied in

[1] This statement is no longer true. Thirty-one accounts detailing the custom revenues in North Wales were recently found in the Public Record Office. The contents of these are incorporated in my tabular analysis of the Welsh custom revenues during the Middle Ages.

[2] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1338-40, pp. 321-2.

[3] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 151, n. 8.

other ports of the realm during the Middle Ages.[1] In tabular[2] form they run thus :—

(*a*) Prise of Wines.

(1) Of every ship, calling in the ports of North Wales laden with twenty tuns (*dolia*) and over—two tuns.

(2) Of every ship, do., laden with less than twenty tuns a custom of two shillings per tun.

(*b*) Customs on Wool, Woolfells, Hides, Skins, Cloth, Iron, and other Merchandise.

	s.	*d.*
(1) Of every sack of Welsh wool,	6	8
(2) Of every ship laden with wool (coket),	2	0
(3) Of every last of hides (tanned and untanned, and salted)[3],	13	4
(4) Of every 15 woolfells,	0	4
(5) Of every 7 goat skins,	0	3
(6) Of every 100 lamb skins,	0	3
(7) Of every entire Welsh cloth,	2	0
(8) Of every English cloth,	2	6
(9) Of every 'Pack of russets' (containing 20 doz. 'cloths'),	10	0
(10) Of every piece of 'kersey' cloth,	0	8
(11) Of every piece of 'Northern' cloth,	4d. or 3d.	
(12) Of every pack of Manchester cottons,	2	6
(13) Of every dole of iron,	2	0
(14) Of every pound of small merchandise,	0	3

A complete statistical summary of the customs taken in North Wales, from the earliest times to the close of the reign of Henry VIII., has been compiled for the purposes of this essay.[4] The trading activity, as illustrated by the accounts ranging from the reign of Edward I. to that of Richard III., was spasmodic and small, especially during and after the reign of Henry IV.

[1] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 153, n. 2. Cf. *Rec. of Carn.*, p. xxii.

[2] This table is compiled from the evidence contained in the chamberlain and customer accounts of North Wales (*temp.* Edward I. to Henry VIII.).

[3] Of every 5 ox-, cow-, or horse-skins four pence, *i.e.* for every 'diker' of hides eight pence.

[4] The subsequent remarks are based on this. In consideration of their bulk, and the advisability of publishing them along with the contemporary returns of the remaining Welsh ports, the statistical summary is not included in the Appendix to this thesis.

Beaumaris stands out clearly as the predominant port of call during this period.

The returns during the reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. show signs of appreciable increase both in the import and export trade. Foreign traders visited the North Welsh ports in larger numbers. During the reign of Henry VII., Breton ships, sometimes as many as seven in one year, made frequent calls at Beaumaris, bringing French wines, Spanish iron, and other miscellaneous merchandise such as fruit, pitch, woollen cards, household furniture, and toilet apparatus of continental manufacture. These foreign ships rarely visited Carnarvon. Beaumaris, during the early Tudor period, more fully asserted the prominence which it undoubtedly enjoyed during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The enterprise of the local merchants, particularly members of the Thikness, Sparrow, and Johnson families, largely accounted for this.

Towards the close of the reign of Henry VII. and during the first nine years of Henry VIII.'s rule, Richard Bulkeley, and his successor in the constableship of the castle of Beaumaris, Rowland Viellvile, farmed the customs of the port of Beaumaris for an annual sum of £13. 6s. 8d. This seems to show that Beaumaris had already established for itself a firm and secure footing in the national commerce of the time. The issues of the port of Carnarvon during this period were practically of no importance. Beaumaris rapidly developed into a port of exchange for Northern cloths and Manchester cottons, and an entry in the account of 13 Henry VIII. suggests that Carnarvon had some commercial footing of its own. Clynnog Bay is regarded as a creek of the port of Carnarvon in this year, a Breton ship leaving three tuns of wine there.

From the tenth to the thirtieth year of Henry's reign the customs returns are complete, excepting one or two years. On the average, they show that three or four trading-ships called at the North Welsh ports every year. There were, however, some important exceptions. In one year as many as fifteen ships called at the port of Beaumaris.

Eighty per cent. of the ships so calling were Breton, many of which were freighted by local merchants. The remaining twenty per cent. consisted mostly of Spanish and Portuguese ships, with a few belonging to Chester, and towards the end of the reign a few native trading-ships from Milford, Beaumaris, and Carnarvon.

The commercial predominance of Beaumaris is further indicated by the fact that its port monopolised more than nine-tenths of the international trade carried on by the above ships. A frequent return for the port of Carnarvon during the reign of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. was the laconic reply that no ships had called there. Of the ships enumerated in the accounts of these reigns only three per cent. called at Carnarvon. Excepting the instance of a Breton ship loading 'northern cloth' at Pwllheli, and another unloading wine at Clynnog, all the remaining goods and merchandise were customed at the port of Beaumaris.

The administration of the custom revenues in North Wales underwent a change with the reign of Henry VIII. The returns were no longer made by the local chamberlain, but were placed under the control of the royal butler at Chester. On this score, the ports of Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris were reputed to have been creeks of the port of Chester—a view that was strongly contested at a subsequent date, especially by Beaumaris. The most potent argument, apart from the obvious administrative independence of the port of Beaumaris during the later Middle Ages, was the mistaken plea that the custom rights of the port of Beaumaris appertained to the constableship of the castle. The evidence, detailing the legal wrangling that ensued on this and other points during the late Tudor and early Stuart period, yields interesting and curious information concerning the method of collecting the customs at Beaumaris during the earlier periods.

In 1593[1] a deposition was taken touching the prise of wines in the ports of Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris. The chief point in dispute was as to whether the ports were creeks of Chester or not. The right of Chester butlers to appoint deputy-collectors in the port of Beaumaris was apparently challenged by the constables of the local castle, who entertained some hazy recollections of their forefathers exercising the right. Several witnesses, on the constable's side, relate vivid stories of the collection of prise by the constables of the castle, and all invariably labour under the delusion that they did this *qua* constables. They all seemingly agreed to forget that the particular constables mentioned as doing this were lessees of the custom revenues there at the time. This gave a new interest to the dispute.

[1] *Exchqr. Depositions*, 35 Elizabeth, No. 9.

Were the custom rights vested in the local constable or in the prerogative of the Crown ?

One Roger Ady, a Beaumaris burgess of more than ninety summers, related an interesting anecdote touching the taking of prise at Beaumaris by Sir Rowland Viellvile, Kt. The latter, he says, as constable of the castle (not, notice, as lessee of the customs revenues there), sent Sir Hugh Goch, his chaplain, to a strange ship to demand prise. Roger (the witness) accompanied Sir Hugh, and goes on to say that when they came aboard, a part of the upper deck was lifted up and opened, and the said Sir Hugh was permitted to go below amongst the wine casks. Roger, in the meantime reluctantly standing above, saw Sir Hugh tasting the said wines severally, and selecting one tun before and another abaft the mast. When these were removed on to the upper deck, Sir Hugh found that the chosen casks were not full, so he proceeded to taste other wines, and caused the casks to be filled up. Roger supervised the stowing away of these two tuns in the castle cellar for the use of Sir Rowland Viellvile. This event, concluded Roger, took place seventy-two years ago (*i.e.* in 1521), he being then eighteen years old.

A deposition [1] was again taken in 1613, touching the question as to whether the prisage of wines in the haven of Beaumaris appertained to the office of the constableship of the castle and captaincy of the town. The acting constable at this time was Richard Bulkeley, grandson of one Richard Bulkeley who leased the custom revenues in the time of Henry VII.

The first witness, William Griffith (58), cousin-german to Richard Bulkeley's father, with whom William had attended the school of the town of Beaumaris, deposed that the Bulkeley family enjoyed the prise of wines for forty years past, the right being appurtenant to the constableship of the castle. 'The port of Beaumaris,' he says, 'is a good haven, able to receive the greatest navy.' Another witness, named Thomas ap William ap Rees, related how his father, William ap Rees, had accompanied Sir Thomas Gronow, parson of Llaniestyn and chaplain to Sir Rowland Viellvile, for the purpose of taking prise of wine in the port of Beaumaris. 'Once,' he says, 'a hogshead was given to the parson.' Subsequent witnesses made similar statements. One seaman said that his boat was once hired to carry the prise

[1] *Exchqr. Depositions*, 10 James I., No. 2.

wines from a ship that anchored at the 'crosse roode' near Priestholme. Incidentally, the same witness made a statement of note, namely, that the taking of the prise out at sea had been the custom at Beaumaris for centuries. This is the apparent explanation of the entries in the late fourteenth-century returns which refer to ships calling *near* the port of Beaumaris.

The dispute with the constable seems to have originated about the year 1548, when Elize Wynne, then controller of Chester, appointed a deputy in the port of Beaumaris. Hugh Goodman, a witness in the earlier deposition, who knew Beaumaris 'this last forty years,' states in 1593 that Bretons, Frenchmen, and other strangers trafficked there, of whom prise was taken for *Her Majesty* (Queen Elizabeth). He also says that the port of Beaumaris is reputed a port or creek belonging to the port of Chester, because the customs controller and other officers of the port of Chester, nominated and appointed deputies for the execution of their respective offices there. The Beaumaris deputies rendered their accounts to the butler at Chester. The same witness also verily believed that the ports and creeks of Conway and Carnarvon did in like manner belong to the port of Chester. William Spicer of Carnarvon, Elice Barlow of Beaumaris, and other merchant witnesses were of this same opinion.

It is clear from the point of view of the administration of the royal customs after the reign of Henry VIII., that the controller of Chester's charge included the North Welsh ports, the issues of which are not entered, as during the early half of the fourteenth century, in the accounts of the local chamberlain at Carnarvon. Was this sufficient to make the North Welsh ports *creeks* of the port of Chester? A contemporary witness was in doubt on this point. 'Beaumaris,' he says, 'was either a creek of or appurtenant to the port of Chester.' It is also clear that the prise of wines was never *ipso facto* vested in the constableship of the castle of Beaumaris. Some witnesses who favoured this view, claimed that the deputy-controllers of the port were subject to the constable of the castle, a plea as improbable as it was untenable.

VII

THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE NORTH WELSH BOROUGHS, 1284-1536

In a previous chapter[1] we found the castles and boroughs to be the appointed mainstays of English interests in North Wales. Their political history during the later Middle Ages is in consequence peculiarly a relative one. Its right comprehension demands a careful consideration of the respective positions of the Crown, of the English burgesses, and of the North Welsh populace.

The avowed object of the English kings from Edward I. to Henry VIII. was the pacification of Wales. To facilitate the accomplishment of this, they founded the English garrison boroughs. One aspect of their political history consists of a consideration of their function in the political administration of the immediate Principality of North Wales. Moreover, in common with other boroughs, they were regarded as valuable assets in the hands of the Crown for the safeguard and protection of the realm of England and the land of Wales. There is also the more purely municipal politics of the borough which we have already noticed in our earlier chapters (III., IV., V., VI.), namely, the acquisition and maintenance of their territorial, institutional, and commercial privileges. Both these external and internal aspects of the borough politics were being continually modified and shaped by the political efforts and social aims of the native inhabitants.

The predominant atmosphere of North Welsh politics during the period of settlement was one of conflict and compromise. The earlier half is essentially a period of temporary revolts—some of them mere affrays, and others assuming wider proportions. In the later half the symptoms of reconciliation appear, and ultimately find actual and legal expression. The period witnessed a change of political sentiment and of economic condition, which is gradually evidenced in three directions, namely, in

[1] See above, p. 23.

(1) the policy of the English Crown, and (2) in the political and social status of both the English burgesses and (3) the North Welsh tenants.

The policy of the Crown gradually changed during the period. At the outset we have the punitive ordinances attached to the Statute of Rhuddlan setting forth the determined precautions of a conqueror for the pacification of a rebel race; at the close, we have the Act of Union setting forth the considerate answer of a reconciler to the wishes of his loyal subjects. The ordinances of Rhuddlan were the product of the defiance of English laws; the Act of Union took the form of a reply to a quest on the part of the Welsh to be governed by the laws of England. The policy of the Crown during the period of this transition was a temporizing one. It varied with the attitude of the Welsh, which fluctuated from a strong tendency to revolt to a weak desire for union. At times when repression was necessary, the Crown acted in the spirit of the Rhuddlan ordinances, treating the native populace with a strong hand. But in cases where points of justice and fairness in respect of the illegal and unjust actions of English officials were at stake, the Welsh generally received sympathetic treatment at the hands of the Crown, reminding us of the Act of Union.

Concurrent with this change of political sentiment we have to consider the gradual transition in the position of the English burgess and the Welsh tenant. From the point of view of the Welshman, the period of settlement was a period of progress from the position of a subordinate tenant of a subjected district, to that of a responsible citizen of the English realm. It was a period of progress to the English burgess also, although during the process he suffered much through the gradual decline of his old political monopoly. This twofold change was the result of a long conflict. The three North Welsh counties, during the period of settlement, witnessed a strenuous struggle for liberty in the form of a racial conflict between the commonalty of the English burgesses and the commonalty of North Welshmen. Upon the introduction of the English municipalities into North Wales, the local inhabitants at once became conscious of the existence of a new liberty, the provisions of which they were unable to enjoy through the nominal barrier of race, or rather the real barrier of suspected loyalty. A persistent struggle naturally ensued. On the one side, the English burgesses strove

not to lose the monopoly of privileges which their political status assured them. On the other side, the North Welshmen strove to acquire the privileges which their political antipathy to the English authorities at first denied to them. The equal enjoyment of the rights and privileges of law and commerce forms a consistent item in the political programme of the mediæval Welsh.

The acquisition by Welshmen of the right to enjoy the commercial and other privileges introduced into Wales at the time of the English conquest is one important consummation of the period of settlement. For political reasons, the process was vigorously checked at various points by the combined action of the English Government and of the boroughs. The latter were favoured in the conflict by their political dependence on the Crown, and also by the fact that they were in line with the advancing civilisation of the period.

The Welshmen persistently clung to the old tribal habits of their ancestors, with the result that their admission into the full privileges of the English borough, as of the English realm, was slow and protracted. In doing this, however, the Welsh at once stimulated and preserved a strong sense of national honour.

The necessity of struggling for the acquisition of the new liberty and of maintaining their old-time customs from undue encroachment—a duty that devolved upon the shoulders of the Welsh tenants upon the disappearance of their princes—seems to have kindled a sense of national honour which gathered strength with the course of the centuries. The gross and high-handed treatment extended to the Welsh peasants by alien and native officials, gave them ample opportunity to vent their grievances. They no longer possessed local princes to champion their rights, and they had not yet acquired the right to elect county members to voice their grievances in the Parliament of the English realm. The elements of Welsh nationalism during the period of settlement are most evident in the local petitions of various commonaltics for the redress of widespread abuses brought about by an unfair and unpopular administration. The most comprehensive expression of Welsh nationalism in the language of the mediæval documents is the phrase, 'Commonalty of North and South Wales,' or the less definite appellation, 'The People of Wales.' Common union and national sympathy with the redress of local grievances were fostered in Welsh circles by the

vague bardic assertion that a descendant of Cadwallader the Blessed would soon regain and ascend to the sovereignty of Britain. The popularity of this old prophecy, and its vivid reality to the Welsh mind of the time, proved a source of strength to the national leaders, and oftentimes made the political environment of the English borough a most threatening one.

The mediæval Welsh, in their petitions, attribute most of their grievances to the deviations of strange officials from the so-called good ways of the old princes. The peasantry, as a whole, seem to have been strongly imbued with the idea that local prosperity could only be associated with the just government of a native prince. There was apparently something very real in the association of their future millennium with the accession to the British throne of one of their own blood. The prevailing public opinion is voiced by the national bard :—

> 'Oftentimes have I wished
> To have a Lord of ability—glorious portent
> From among us ourselves.'

The Welsh people of this period were much bent on having a prince of their own. Even the creation of Edward of Carnarvon to be the first English Prince of Wales was popularly received throughout the Principality. Whenever the rule of *created* princes of this type, or the administration of their representatives erred on the side of tyranny and extortion, the Welsh peasantry either attempted to make princes of their own, or extended ready welcome to any local chieftain having lineal claims to the position.

The sounding of the old prophecy (associated in the pre-conquest days with the extermination of the Saxons at the hands of the militant Welsh princes) during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries came to be used as a vehicle of social progress rather than of political aggrandisement. Prophecy proved a considerable incentive to patriotic effort during the Middle Ages, and the English authorities, both at Carnarvon and Westminster, made persistent attempts to stay its influence. During the period several statutes and ordinances were passed dealing severely with the rhymester and minstrel classes—the nourishers of revolt and unrest. Welsh bards had little or nothing to do with the North Welsh boroughs except to drink their wine.

The theory of redemption at the hands of a descendant of

Cadwallader was apparently abandoned by the Welsh upon the accession of Henry Tudor to the British throne. His success was locally regarded as the consummation of what had appeared to most as idle prophecy. Henry himself took great pains to possess himself of the alleged facts, and the careful clerks who set forth his title in the columns of the Rolls of Parliament made more than passing reference to the old theory of Brutian descent.

One thing is clear. The battle of Bosworth is a landmark in the political history of Wales, as in the political status of the North Welsh boroughs. It marks the point at which a gradual change in the attitude of the Crown towards English burgess and Welsh tenant becomes perceptible. The external symptoms of an union, in which the factor of race as a condition for the enjoyment of State privilege was to be obliterated for ever, come to sight. After this, the English boroughs of North Wales, as of Wales, are gradually relieved from their political responsibility, and the Welsh community by degrees throws off the political impediments of the Middle Ages. In less than fifty years the native populace clamour for the Act of Union. This, for the first time, gave both Welshmen and Englishmen residing in Wales the citizen privileges of the realm of England.

Side by side with the progress of this political drama, there were silent economic forces at work gradually revolutionising the conditions of borough and country life, making the primary condition of burghal life one of wealth rather than of race, and transplanting the importance of the borough to a commercial rather than a political sphere as heretofore.

Bearing in mind these general features of North Welsh politics during the period of settlement, the following narrative of the most important incidents in the political story of the English boroughs may appear to be more intelligible, both in its relation to the wider history of the nation, and to the narrower interest of the respective boroughs.

During the years immediately following the conquest, Edward I. was busily engaged in laying the foundation of his policy in North Wales. The conquest of Wales was celebrated with great pomp at the little sea village of Nevin on the first day of August 1284. According to the version of the English chronicler, native earls and foreign knights in large numbers joined in the congratulations extended to the Conqueror on the downfall of

Welsh independence.[1] More gratifying to the Welsh was the event that took place a few months previously in the English borough of Carnarvon,[2] namely, the birth of Edward of Carnarvon, who at the age of seventeen, was to become the first English Prince of Wales.

The decade following the Statute of Rhuddlan was naturally an anxious one to English authorities throughout Wales. The introduction of the changes instituted by the legal and constitutional dictates of the Conqueror brought into relief the salient points of political moment in Wales during the period. The English authorities became alive to the responsibilities of the task they had undertaken. The Welsh on their side, though somewhat inactive through the inevitable torpor that set in with the abolition of their independence, gradually divined what was the practical meaning of the elaborate arrangements made for their admission into the benefits and conditions of a new political organism. The work of castle-building and borough-making went on apace during these first ten years. Progress was not yet seriously interrupted, but a racial conflict was at hand.

The Welsh populace exhibited discomforting signs throughout, and made several abortive attempts to throw off the English yoke. The uneasiness arose partly from the dissatisfaction of the representatives of the old princely chieftains with their treatment by the Conqueror, and partly from the exorbitant policy of the new officials towards the local peasantry. Rhys ap Meredith's duel with Robert de Tibetot, the King's justice in South Wales, came to naught in 1291, after a struggle of four years' duration.[3] In North Wales everything was outwardly quiet until the year 1294. In this particular year the Welsh outbreak[4] took the form of a national outburst against the tyrannical conduct of the English officials in Wales since the annexation. The North Wales episode of this revolt lasted nearly a year, extending roughly from Michaelmas 1294 to Michaelmas of the next year.

The condition of Welsh politics was somewhat aggravated at this time, by the imposition of an imperial tax of a fifteenth on all movables, for the carrying on of Edward's Gascon wars.

[1] *Flores Hist.* (Rolls), vol. iii. p. 62. [2] *Ib.*, p. 61.
[3] *The Welsh Wars of Edward I.* (Morris), pp. 204-18.
[4] *Ann. Wig.* (Rolls), p. 517.

This innovation was not favourably received by the Welsh tenantry, despite the King's pledge that it should not be taken as a precedent for future grants.[1] There was also strong objection on the part of the Welsh to acquiesce to the compulsory levy of Welsh soldiers for service in Gascony.[2] The fact that the King himself was at Portsmouth, awaiting favourable winds to embark his forces for the struggle with France, made the autumn of 1294 a particularly opportune time for a revolt against these innovations of the new civilisation. The circumstances flattered the Welsh people so much that they set up princes of their own, whose appeal to the native military in the cause of domestic reform was likely to be more telling than the compulsory order of a conqueror to further his schemes of aggrandisement abroad.

The men of Anglesea were the pioneers of the revolt in the north under the leadership of one Madoc, reputed to be a natural son of Llywelyn the Last.[3] The notorious Roger de Pulesdon had been exercising his tyrannical rule in this island ever since 1284, the date of his appointment to the first shrievalty of the county. The tenants of the native cantreds at a later date coupled his name with the compilation of 'false' extents as the best recollection of his rule.[4] His unpopularity was further intensified in the eyes of the Welsh populace by his connection with the levying of the new and odious tax.[5] The actual outbreak of the North Welsh rising centres round the strained relations of Roger de Pulesdon and the people of Anglesea. There is but very little evidence for the Welsh side of the struggle; the extant details relate mostly to the attempts at its suppression on the part of the English.

The onslaught of the Welsh appears to have been as unexpected as it was successful, and as soon as the English King had been apprised of its serious proportions, he abandoned his projected French campaign, and hastened to support the English boroughs that were being threatened with premature destruction at the hands of the Welsh insurgents.[6]

The rebels, after ransacking the district of Anglesea, when the church of the Welsh town of Llanvaes was burnt and

[1] Cf. *Wales*, p. 211.
[2] Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-3.
[3] Contemporary authorities style him 'Madoc ap Llywelyn' (see *Dict. Nat. Biog., s.n.*, and p. 228 below).
[4] Cf. *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 216.
[5] *Flores Hist.* (Rolls), iii. p. 91.
[6] *Ann. de Oseneia* (Rolls), pp. 338-9.

destroyed,[1] made a sudden raid on the borough of Carnarvon during the progress of the Michaelmas fair of 1294. The English townsmen were put to the sword, and Roger de Pulesdon, the hated sheriff, is said to have suffered a cruel death at the hands of the Anglesea Welshmen.[2] The town and the castle, then in course of erection, were plundered and burnt,[3] and the new English colonists, to their great disappointment, were deprived of a coveted charter.[4]

A simultaneous attack was made on English interests in the vales of the Clwyd and the Dee by the unruly tenants of the Earl of Denbigh. The boroughs of Denbigh and Overton, on the northern March, were continually harassed.[5]

On the destruction of Carnarvon, the main body of the revolters withdrew for safety, some to Anglesea, and some to the parts of Snowdon.[6] The castle of Bere in Merioneth, being insufficiently garnished, was in a precarious state, but the castles of Criccieth and Harlech, thanks to the inestimable aid of the borough men, were equal to the emergency, and successfully held their own against the attacks of the Welsh.[7]

Whilst the preparations of Edward I. for the complete subjugation of the rising were maturing, the castle of Bere became irrecoverably lost to the English cause. Edward was apparently much concerned over the safety of Bere, the more, perhaps, owing to the absence of its custodian, Robert Fitz-Walter, whom he had enlisted for service abroad. On the 27th of October he directed the Earl of Arundel, Fulk Fitz Waryn, Roger L'Estrange, Bogo de Knoville, and Peter Corbet to organise an expedition for its speedy relief.[8] The subsequent silence of documents and chronicles, according to the careful and minute author of *The Welsh Wars of Edward I.*, argues that the relief was effected, but the fact that the place is now lost to history seems to suggest the opposite. The last we hear of the castle and borough of Bere is that it was attacked by the Welsh.[9] Only four castles remained (virtually three), now that Carnarvon was destroyed, to maintain the English hold.

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1318-23, p. 71. [2] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1902-3, p. 36.
[3] *Hemingburgh* (E.H.S.), ii. pp. 57-8.
[4] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 6507.
[5] Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 253, and *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 10,081.
[6] *Ann. de Dunstaplia* (Rolls), pp. 385-7. [7] See ch. iv. above, *s.n.*
[8] Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 252-3 *et ref.*
[9] Cf. ch. iii. above, *s.n.*

The King, after spending some time in quelling the insurgents in the district of the Four Cantreds, arrived at Conway towards the close of the year 1294, where he made his headquarters for the next three months. The unfortunate division of his army by the sudden rising of the river Conway upon his entrance into the town, and the subsequent straits to which he and his garrison were put in consequence, are well known. The Welsh forces concentrated their attention on Conway, and from the 10th to the 24th of January 1295 the King had to suffer the indignity of a siege. Considerable damage was done to the town property before relief was afforded by the decisive defeat of the Welsh in the battle of Conway, better known as the battle of the Two Groves. This victory so dismayed the Welsh that they took no concerted action against English arms again. Marauding troops, moreover, wandered here and there, and during the following months the garrisons of Harlech and Criccieth were strengthened with men and victual.[1]

Towards the end of April the English king proceeded westward from Conway, accompanied by a small field army, and after a stay of two days at Bangor advanced to Anglesea, making his headquarters at Llanvaes until the sixth day of May.[2] According to the figures of a contemporary annalist, island revolters to the number of eleven thousand came to the King's peace there.[3] In the following month the inhabitants of Merioneth swore homage to the King at Dolgelly. Edward subsequently paid a short and cursory visit to the district of Cardigan and the Marcher lands of Brecon and Montgomery, in connection with kindred episodes of the revolt there, and made another hasty visit to Carnarvon and Anglesea before his return to England.[4] Arrangements were made for the erection of a strong castle and the foundation of an English borough on the site of the old town of Llanvaes, with the object of overawing the rebellious island. Minute instructions were also given for the renewal of operations at Carnarvon.

The King left North Wales for England about the 10th of July 1295.[5] He had nominally assured himself of the loyalty of the North Welsh by receiving their oath of fealty, and he took care that the local hostages, numbering about one hundred

[1] Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 254-5.
[2] *Itin. of Edward I.* (Gough's), p. 129.
[3] *Ann. Wig.* (Rolls), p. 520.
[4] Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 264.
[5] *Itin. of Edward I.*, p. 131.

and seventy, were safely despatched to Chester, Nottingham, and other English castles.[1] He solemnly warned the Welsh that he would exterminate the entire nation if they again presumed to resist his authority.[2] These, of course, were the usual threats.

The King left the reduction of Madoc and his paltry band in the hands of John de Havering. After the memorable battle of the Two Groves, near Conway, the whereabouts of Madoc were little known. It is, however, certain that Madoc had not submitted before Edward's departure for England,[3] and that ultimately John de Havering was instrumental in negotiating his capture. The facts are these: the King offered a reward of five hundred marks to any one who brought to him alive or dead the '*Madok ap Lewelin qui se fist prince.*' On the 10th of July 1295[4] he also delegated the keeping of North Wales to John de Havering. Havering, on account of the recent disturbances, found it necessary to have a large number of followers at increased wages, for the peace was uncertain owing to the fact that '*celui qui se fist Prince se tint as bois.*' In a petition[5] to this effect John de Havering claims expenses in this regard extending from 10 July to 3 September next following; moreover in a parallel petition[6] he demands the five hundred marks, since '*il lui mena meismes celui Madok a sa volunte sauns condicion de covenaunt et grauntz coustages mist et defere le venir et del mener.*' This points to the unconditional surrender of Madoc about the beginning of September 1295. On p. 220 of the *Record of Carnarvon* we have the statement that one Enyr Vychan, of the commote of Talybont in the county of Merioneth, had been of some use in capturing Madoc ap Llywelyn, who made himself Prince of Wales. The consensus of opinion is that Madoc spent the remainder of his days in the Tower.[7]

His revolt was rather significant from the point of view of borough history. It was the first occasion upon which the English authorities in North Wales were called upon to cope with any serious opposition on the part of the native inhabitants

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1288-96, pp. 425, 466.
[2] *Ann. de Dunstaplia* (Rolls), p. 387. [3] *Ann. Wig.* (Rolls), p. 522.
[4] This explains the apparent anomaly into which the author of *The Welsh Wars of Edward I.* leads his reader on p. 265. Havering was appointed justice in the following September.
[5] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. E, 83. [6] *Ib.*, E, 69.
[7] *Trivet* (E.H.S.), p. 338.

since the conquest. The castellated boroughs had a varied experience. Bere finally disappeared upon the success of the Welsh. Conway remains memorable for the peculiar experiences of the English sovereign there, and for the novel tactics [1] adopted in the battle of the Two Groves which resulted in the raising of its siege. The burgesses of the town, too, for a long time to come, attributed the destruction of their mills to the doings of Madoc.[2] The most considerable damage was perpetrated at Carnarvon. The Crown expended more than £1000 on the subsequent reparation of the houses and walls of the town.[3] The burning of a valued charter and the devastation of crop-growing lands were other causes of local lament associated with the rising of Madoc. One thing above all else had been revealed during the progress of the revolt, and that was the necessity of keeping careful patrol over the island of Anglesea. The creation both of the borough of Beaumaris, and later of the borough of Newborough, were the direct results of this.[4]

The circumstances attending the revolt, too, afforded considerable insight into many of the problems of local government in North Wales at this time. It has been said that the Crown, in consequence of this rising, changed its attitude towards its North Welsh subjects, and that mainly in the interests of the English boroughs. Carnhuanawc, the well-known author of the standard history of Wales in the vernacular, has suggested, and with some degree of probability, that it was in connection with Madoc's revolt that the ordinances forbidding to Welshmen the privileges of the English in North Wales originated.[5] A reference in the Rolls of Parliament late in the reign of Henry VI., attributes the origin of these ordinances to the time of Edward I. after the conquest '*upon the rebell of Walssh men in his tyme.*' [6] The rising of Madoc was certainly the first formidable rebellion of the North Welshmen in the time of Edward I. after the conquest. Furthermore, the original charters and the Statutes of Rhuddlan, all drawn up after the conquest, contain no actual prohibition against Welshmen becoming burgesses of the English walled towns. These latter were obviously intended to be of English sympathy from the beginning. The sad experience of many of them during the progress of the revolt

[1] Cf. Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 256-7.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1170/5.
[3] Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 270.
[4] See above, p. 31.
[5] *Hanes Cymru* (J. Price), pp. 751-2.
[6] *Rot. Parl.*, v. p. 104*a*.

seems to have revealed the importance of further assuring their integrity by the factor of race.

The Edwardian ordinances, usually appended to the Statutes of Rhuddlan, thus construed, would appear to have been the necessary antidote to a preponderating Welsh sympathy in the boroughs. The Cymricising of the burgess-ship was nominally checked by law. The boroughs were further protected by parallel ordinances rendering the rural Welsh defenceless, and forbidding all future congregations of Welshmen without the express licence of the English Crown.[1] The strengthening of the English boroughs at the expense of weakening the Welsh opposition is the key to the English legislative policy in North Wales during the Middle Ages.

The revolt also brought the Crown face to face with the possible defects of its administrative government in North Wales. It emphasised the dangers imminent to the English cause there, through the irresponsibility and arbitrary action of its officers, who often, through ignorance and wanton ambition, subjected the native populace to severe treatment. Edward I., in connection with this rebellion, pursued his usual policy of investigation after suppression. When the revolt had subsided, John de Havering, justiciar of North Wales, and William de Sikun, constable of Conway castle, were commissioned to inquire into the complaints of the commonalty of North Wales touching the trespasses, injuries, extortions, and oppressions inflicted upon them, since the land came into the King's hands, by the sheriffs, bailiffs, and other ministers of the King in those parts.[2] The findings of this inquest revealed the customary evils of a harsh administration. Several of the most glaring irregularities were amended. After this it became a common policy of the English Crown to institute periodical inquiries into the condition of Wales.

It is also worthy to note that the rising of Madoc, from the fact of its cause being connected with the levying of troops and the collection of subsidies, introduces yet another phase of the English policy in Wales during the period of settlement, which we must learn to appreciate. The country was frequently drained of its people and money for the purposes of foreign expeditions. An event of more than ordinary occurrence

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 131-2. [2] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1292-1301, p. 165.

was the selection of one or other of the North Welsh boroughs as the common meeting-place of local troops for preliminary equipment, and embarkation for parts beyond the sea. The Welsh sometimes distorted the objects of such meetings into a rebellious assertion of their local wrongs.

Favoured by the new legislation and other immunities, the boroughs improved their general condition during the next ten years (1294-1304). During this time all the burgesses, as we have seen, were allowed to hold their lands rent free. The North Welshmen, on the other hand, continued to be somewhat suspicious of the regard in which they were held by the English King. In the year next following the revolt of Madoc, when several Scottish prisoners captured in the battle of Dunbar were drafted in small groups into the castles of Conway, Criccieth, and Harlech for safe custody,[1] it was rumoured amongst the Welsh that the English King held them in great suspicion. Before the end of the year, however, Edward made haste to assure the Abbot of Conway, Thomas Daunvers, Tudor ap Gronow, and Howel ap Kenwryk—delegates specially deputed to him by the commonalty of Snowdon and Anglesea in this behalf—that he entertained no such suspicion towards them, but held them for his faithful and devoted subjects.[2]

In the documents of the next few years, the North Welshmen are described as subjects loving the King's honour and advantage. On the express understanding that moneys granted by them should not be to their prejudice or construed as a precedent for future exactions, the North Welsh commonalty made a lavish subsidy grant to support Edward I. in his campaigns against the Scots.[3] North Welshmen, too, filled the ranks of the large armies that were raised in Wales for the prosecution of the same war.[4] A little before 1297, Welshmen of North Wales (among others), under their leader Griffin ap Rees, served the King in Flanders.[5] Foot-soldiers from the district of Snowdon also served willingly under the new 'Prince of Wales,'[6] whose assumption of this title in 1301 caused universal satisfaction to the Welsh people.

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1288-96, p. 482.
[2] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1292-1301, p. 223.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 534.
[4] *Ib.*, pp. 342, 598.
[5] *Ib.*, 1301-7, p. 85.
[6] *Ib.*, p. 335. Cf. *The Political History of England*, 1216-1377, by T. F. Tout, p. 210, n. 1.

The fact of Edward II.'s birth at Carnarvon kindled among the Welsh an affection for him that was not obliterated by the later actions of his life. His principate of some half a dozen years was in many respects an important one to both English and Welsh interests in the Principality of North Wales. He remedied many of the local grievances to which his father could afford but hasty notice. He somewhat modified the restrictions imposed on the native populace by the Edwardian ordinances, and paid considerable regard to the old Welsh customs and practices. His careful replies to the famous series of Kennington petitions are a lasting monument of his vigorous attempt to cope with the miscellaneous problems of local government in North Wales at the beginning of the fourteenth century. All told, these extend to more than ten printed folio pages of the *Record of Carnarvon*,[1] and formed the basis of the later ordinances, enacted by him as King in 1316, for the regulation of North Wales.

In the aforesaid replies, we find Edward of Carnarvon posing as the protector of the Welsh peasant, and as the upholder of the hereditary rights of the tribesman. Rents were reduced, and old-time customs relating to the erection of grist mills and the incidence of tribal dues, with due regard to exceptional privileges, were retained. Ejected tenants were replaced in their tenements, and great regard was shown for the rights of the local clergy.

In the formulation of his Welsh policy, Edward did not let his affection outrun his discretion. The Statute of Rhuddlan was not changed in effect. He simply reformed the gross injustices which accompanied its administration at the hands of his father's officials. The English burgess, as much as the Welshman, found him a willing supporter. Most of his concessions to the North Welsh boroughs have been already detailed in earlier chapters. He gave Newborough its first charter, and during his rule as King he founded the free borough of Bala, and also granted the valuable privilege of a fee-farm to both Harlech and Conway. Several of the boroughs, too, as we have seen, took advantage of his generous spirit in their efforts to expand their territorial areas.

As King, Edward of Carnarvon never visited North Wales in person, the district being, for the most part, under the control of

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 212-25.

Roger Mortimer of Chirk, and other officials of questionable bearing. The story of his reign in North Wales is the story of ministerial misrule, which was to some extent inevitable, owing to the political troubles in which the King found himself embroiled.

As early as 1308 complaints of Mortimer's despotic rule in North Wales began to reach the King. He openly defied the control of the local chamberlain, issuing writs and other instruments not returnable to or remediable at the chancery of Carnarvon. He also ignored the solemn decree of the Council, by extending the privileges of office to Welshmen, and that in his own interests. Bailiffs, reeves, and other ministers were elected irregularly, with the result that the affairs of the King, as of the North Welsh people, were going to utter ruin. Local officers became intendant to the justiciar rather than to the chamberlain.[1] The Parliament of 1309[2] made some effort to define more clearly the administrative functions and relations of the royal ministers in North Wales, but with no good results. Five years later, we find the King himself appointing a commission to inquire into the complaints of his men of North Wales, to the effect that his bailiffs and ministers there had for a long time harassed and molested them on divers occasions. Contemporary complaints reached the King in wholesale fashion from South Wales. During the years 1315 and 1316 he was again besieged with Welsh petitions of a similar character. The King was at this time particularly anxious to do Wales justice, as it was rumoured that the country was about to be invaded by the rebel Scots who had lately attacked Ireland. He did what he could by promulgating ordinances enjoining a strict observance of the Kennington policy laid down by him as Prince.[3]

The preceding injunctions brought no apparent respite. Ministerial and other differences in South Wales at this time came to a head in the revolt of Llywelyn Bren and his accomplices. This 'Nine Weeks' War' wrought havoc to many of the southern boroughs. Special precautions were taken by the authorities to prevent a similar outbreak in North Wales. The King despatched urgent orders from Lincoln to John de Grey, the acting justiciar of North Wales, to victual and munify

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1307-13, pp. 88-9. [2] *Rot. Parl.*, i. p. 273.
[3] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1313-17, pp. 229, 394-5, 406, 433-4, 469-70.

the local castles. Personal custody was at the same time enjoined on all the constables.[1] At Beaumaris the castle garrison was increased above its normal numbers, for which provision John de Sapy was paid over and above his usual stipend at a later date.[2] This special garnishment of Beaumaris seems to point to some particular fear or doubt as to the loyalty of the isle of Anglesea. There was, however, no actual outbreak during the revolt in South Wales, but it transpires that something like an organised revolt was being contemplated at this time by the inhabitants of North Wales. It was rumoured that the English castles and boroughs were to be razed to the ground.

The North Welshmen seem to have regained some of their old national pride under the moderate policy of Edward II. At any rate they appear to have got hold of the notion that political subjection did not necessarily imply social stagnation. Their rising hopes found some organic expression in the alleged revolt of Sir Gruffydd Llwyd of Trefgarnedd, a distinguished Welsh chieftain, who swore homage to Edward I. at Chester, and received the honour of knighthood on conveying the joyful news of the birth of Edward of Carnarvon to the King at Rhuddlan.

The exact date of Llwyd's revolt is not known. There is no certainty that it took place at all. Authentic evidence points to active preparations on the part of Gruffydd before 1318, and the year 1322 is generally assumed to be the correct date of his death. Some historians have assigned Llwyd's rising to the year 1317,[3] which date tallies very well with the fact that two of Llwyd's letters, contemplating joint action with Edward Bruce and his rebel Scots, then in Ireland, must have been sent before 1318.[4] As these negotiations, however, are known to have fallen through, it may be reasonably surmised that the intended revolt was postponed. There can be no doubt that the local peasantry expected much at Llwyd's hands. Traditional story mentions 1322[5] as the actual year of the revolt, when Sir Gruffydd Llwyd is represented as overrunning the North Welsh castles and raiding the Marcher districts. We

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1313-18, p. 267.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 392.
[3] *E.g.* R. W. Morgan, Cathrall.
[4] *Dic. Nat. Biog.*, *s.n.* Edward Bruce.
[5] *Hanes Cymru* (as above), pp. 767-8.

have found little that is authentic to substantiate this. The boroughs seem to have successfully resisted his efforts whenever these took place, and the contemporary tone of the national poetry suggests failure. Moreover, late in the year 1322 we find an order on the close roll[1] commanding the immediate release and adequate compensation of one Anian ap Ieuan, a distinguished Welsh burgess of Beaumaris, who had been wrongfully imprisoned on the plea that he adhered to the King's contrarients in North Wales and elsewhere. It may be submitted that Anian would be likely to join Llwyd of Anglesea in the attempt to relieve his countrymen of the hardships under which they suffered. In February and March of the previous year,[2] Edward II. sent special injunctions to the local authorities in North Wales owing to its disturbed condition.

On the testimony of a contemporary bard, who bewailed the capture and imprisonment of Sir Gruffydd, it is generally accepted that he was beheaded at Rhuddlan. It would appear from his version that something akin to a national panic had seized the North Welsh inhabitants upon his downfall. 'It was a sad year,' says the bard, 'for the vigorous patriot.' His failure cast Gwynedd (*i.e.* the district of North Wales) into a heavy and melancholy mood. The great strength of Mona had become an empty shadow, and the country mourned and wore the aspect of Lent.[3] Llwyd is popularly regarded as the Welsh Wallace. His letters[4] to Bruce in Ireland are interesting and important for the light which they throw upon the social condition and the current political thought of the time. The overthrow of the English yoke is carefully connected with the traditional story that the line of Brutus was to be again restored to the kingship of Britain.

Sir Gruffydd Llwyd's attempt, however, did not succeed in removing the abuses of English administrators in North Wales. The district for years to come simmered with dissatisfaction and complaint. The conduct of the King's ministers in North Wales was a question that troubled Edward III. at many points during his reign. Almost contemporary with the attempted rising of Sir Gruffydd in the north occurred the Barons' War (*Rhyfel y*

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1318-23, p. 619.
[2] *Ib.*, 1318-23, pp. 290-1. Cf. *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1321-4, p. 136.
[3] *Lit. of the Kymry* (Stephens), pp. 465-7.
[4] *Hist. of North Wales* (Cathrall), i. pp. 200-1.

Barwniaid) in South Wales. The native populace seem to have dissociated themselves from the sinister actions of the King's ministers in this episode. Whilst the North Welsh footmen were prepared to set out in the King's name to Scotland,[1] John de Sapy, the constable of Beaumaris, John Cam, and others of Mortimer's household in North Wales, added to the domestic discontent by joining the Bohun and Despenser duel in Glamorgan.[2] The King's most trusted minister in North Wales during the subsequent machinations of the Mortimer family, in conjunction with Queen Isabella to remove the King from the throne, was Robert Power, the local chamberlain. During the progress of the Queen's War (*Rhyfel y Frenhines*) the King's peace is said to have been much disturbed in North Wales. Robert Power was put to expense much beyond the amount of his appointed allowance. In the next reign he was in some fashion compensated for his expenditure.[3] One item of these costs related to one John de Middulhope, who was sent from Carnarvon to London to certify to the lord King of the state of North Wales in 1326. The envoy was allowed two pence per day for thirteen days in respect of the journey.[4]

Between the conquest and the Act of Union, Edward II. was the only sovereign who summoned Welsh members to the English Parliament. There are no returns for the writs issued in 1322 to the effect that twenty-four members should appear for North and South Wales respectively. In the Parliament held in January 1327, nominally summoned in Edward II.'s name, the counties of Carnarvon, Merioneth, and Anglesea were represented by eighteen Welshmen, and three of the English boroughs by six Englishmen, viz. Peter Russel and William Saleman for Beaumaris; Richard de Montgomery and Richard de Middelton for Carnarvon; and Henry Somer and Richard de Heyewood for Conway.[5]

The North Welsh mourned their sovereign's fateful end at Berkeley castle. His sympathetic treatment of their reasonable

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1318-23, p. 421.

[2] *Ib.*, 1323-7, pp. 2, 85, 228. Cf. *Min. Acc.* 1212/4, where Sapy, etc., are said to have adhered to enemies of the King in the parts of Glamorgan before Easter 1322.

[3] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1327-30, p. 494. [4] *Min. Acc.* 1212/12.

[5] *Parl. Writs*, vol. ii., Appendix, p. 184 (cf. *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1318-23, p. 539); *ib.*, part ii. p. 364. Vid. *Returns of Members of Parliament* (*Parl. Papers*, 1878), part i. p. 77; *Parl. Hist. of Wales* (Williams), p. 1; *Story of Wales*, pp. 223-4. Cf. *Hist. of Alnwick* (G. Tate), i. p. 45.

demands was a decided stimulus to them in their long march towards political freedom. Edward's popularity was in no small part due to the fact that he originated no punitive ordinances against them.

Edward III. never visited Wales in person. Though his reign was not marred by any serious revolts in North Wales, it was a reign of political tension throughout. The district literally simmered with domestic disaffection, and, in view of the prolonged war with France and periodic troubles in Scotland and Ireland, required continued and intelligent supervision. Concerted action on the part of the King's enemies by way of Wales called for assiduous attention, and the Welsh, through the obvious tyranny of the English administration and the indirect advantage afforded through England's Continental troubles, developed their sense of hatred towards the English burgesses and everything English in North Wales. The constant levies of North Welshmen for foreign service, the widespread devastations of the Black Death, together with the firm Welsh policy of Edward III. and his son, the Black Prince, did much to minimise local differences, and in some part prevented the smaller feuds from assuming national proportions.

On the whole, Edward III.'s attitude towards the North Welsh was one of suspicion, and he was apparently justified in this. He had all to fear from a confederacy of his various political foes. He was also sufficiently acquainted with the social grievances of Welshmen to know the sweet glamour to them of any scheme that promised permanent or even temporary respite. Up to the time when the Black Prince took the government of the Principality into his hands, Edward left no stone unturned in order to remove ministerial abuses, and to check all racial presumption on the part of the English and Welsh populace there.

The complaints during the earlier years of his kingship were mostly the result of the ministerial misrule of the previous reign. Suits and services contrary to law and custom had been forced in wholesale fashion. Sessions were irregularly held and justice inadequately administered, with the result that within a few months after his accession, Edward III. was put to understand that many malefactors and disturbers of his peace were wandering through North and South Wales, making confederacies, committing felonies, and indulging freely in

like excesses.[1] Later petitions reached him during the years 1330 and 1331 from individual officers, setting forth their personal troubles and the general lack of obedience to the Crown. The local constables and sheriffs showed an unwillingness to obey the justiciar and chamberlain. The commonalty of North Wales, too, complained of the evils attending the system of attorney, and of the excessive exaction of ancient customary dues such as *potura stalonum*. They earnestly asked for the exercise of their customs and usages as *in the time of the old princes of Wales*.[2] Contemporary petitions were also framed by Englishmen dwelling in North Wales, in which they show the peril of their position. Felonies and kindred oppressions perpetrated by Welshmen on the poor English inhabitants were much too common. About this time one Griffin ap Rees, Kt., and David ap Ada are said to have been particular offenders in this respect.[3]

Edward III.'s policy of pacifying Wales was a twofold one. Like Edward II., he instituted careful inquiry, enjoining officers to the strict observance of their respective charges, and, like Edward II., he rid the country of as many obnoxious Welshmen as was possible. On one occasion he despatched Edward de Bohun to North Wales to inquire into the state of the land and the acts of the ministers there, and also to hold regular sessions.[4] He also took advantage of his strained relations with Ireland, whither he commissioned six hundred North Welshmen for service in 1332,[5] the local boroughs supplying suitable ships for their transport.[6] In 1334 North Welshmen were again levied for the King's service in Scotland.[7] Edward's anxiety at this time to get troops from every quarter brought him into conflict with the burgesses of Newborough, whom he all but enforced for service in Scotland contrary to the tenor of their original charter.[8] The Welsh were willing fighters during the Middle Ages. They preferred the glories of battle on foreign soil to living under servile conditions in their native land. They were, however, somewhat loth to perform their duties as defenders of the realm. In 1336 a number of Welshmen in the principal parts of North and South Wales absolutely refused to

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1327-30, pp. 217-8.
[2] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), Nos. 7289, 10,058; *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1330-4, p. 61. Cf. *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1337-9, pp. 91-2.
[3] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1330-4, p. 143. [4] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1333-7, p. 350.
[5] *Ib.*, p. 321. [6] *Ib.*, p. 323. [7] *Ib.*, p. 354.
[8] *Ancient Petitions* (P.R.O.), No. 566 (*Rot. Parl.*, ii. p. 92*a*).

set out on the King's service unless wages were paid to them beforehand. Such payments were not generally made to those about to set out on a defensive expedition, all being compelled, as a duty, to assist in the defence of the realm against foreign invasions. With a view to inducing the Welshmen to set out, the local justices of North and South Wales were ordered to pay them part of their wages.[1]

The doings of mediæval Welshmen in foreign lands excited considerable interest at home, and in a sense intensified the racial hatred that existed in the immediate neighbourhood of the English boroughs. The Welsh gradually became conscious of the possibilities of their martial prowess. It is a matter of no surprise that they became proverbial for their tendency to rebel. Edward took precautions that as little incentive to revolt as possible should take place in the land. Baseless rumours were at once quashed, and the rebel barons were severely reprimanded. In 1337 [2] Roger Le Straunge came in for such treatment at his hands for an attack on the lands of Charlton of Powys, who was then absent on the King's service in Scotland. 'The Welsh,' says the King, 'from their lightness of head may rise in war on such pretexts.' In the very next year (1338) special injunctions were sent to the acting officials of all the castles and boroughs in North and South Wales to be on their guard, 'as certain galleys have invaded the realm, and propose to go to Wales and do all possible harm.'

At this date Wales appears to have been in a state of general unrest. In the Westminster Parliament of 1339 North Wales is represented as being infested with evil-doers and disturbers of the peace. Edward III. was fully alive to the dangers of the situation, and in this year enacted a famous code of 'twenty Articles,' with the express object of amending the state of North Wales.[3] The purport of these articles, so far as they related to the boroughs, has been already considered in previous sections. They pointed to general apathy and neglect on the part of local officials, and inaugurated many reforms in the administrative, judicial, and commercial system of the district.

The ameliorating effect of these elaborate ordinances was to some extent checked at the outset by the financial strain of the prolonged French wars. Ministerial returns fell into arrears,

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1333-7, p. 593.
[2] *Ib.*, 1337-9, p. 136.
[3] *Ib.*, 1339-41, pp. 249-54.

with the result that administrative troubles were as rife as before.[1] In 1343 the justice of North Wales was commissioned to inquire into the state of Wales, with power to arrest all those suspected of rebellion.[2] At this critical juncture the government of the Principality was vested in the hands of the Black Prince and his Council. The young Prince had hardly realised the character of his new task, when his presence at the head of a large host of fighting Welshmen was required in the impending French campaigns.[3]

There is nothing to show that the Black Prince ever entered North Wales. His interest therein is, however, sufficiently attested by the large number of valuable documents relating to North Wales associated with his name. Two-thirds of the contents of the *Record of Carnarvon*, a folio publication of the record commissioners in 1838, extending to more than three hundred pages, was compiled at his instance. It was seemingly this portion that was known to surveyors of the Elizabethan and Stuart periods as *The Prince's Book*. The fealty roll[4] of the entire Principality, taken on his accession to the title, is one of the most valuable documents that exist for the administrative and social history of the Principality of the Middle Ages. Several of his letters are preserved among the *Ancient Correspondence* at the Public Record Office, where also exists the celebrated *White Book of Cornwall* (three hundred and six pages);[5] this contains a register of all letters issued under the Great and Privy Seals by the Black Prince from July 1346 to January 1347 touching lands, offices, franchises, revenues, and various transactions of a private and public character in the Principality of Wales, the Duchy of Cornwall, and the County Palatinate of Chester.

The Black Prince was unfortunate in the selection of one of his first deputies in North Wales. He was one Henry de Shaldeford, who had somewhat abused his position as a subofficer in one of the Anglesea commotes under Edward III.[6] On his way to Carnarvon to exercise the duties of his new office Henry was suddenly attacked and killed by a band of Welsh

[1] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1341-3, pp. 394, 422, 660.
[2] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1343-5, p. 66.
[3] *Ib., s.a.*, 1343-5, p. 494; *Fœdera* (1825), iii. pt. 1, p. 60.
[4] Printed in *Original Documents* (*Arch. Camb.*, suppl. vol., 1877), pp. cxlviii.-clxxv.
[5] *Treasury of Receipt Misc. Book*, No. 144.
[6] *Orig. Docts.* (*Arch. Camb.*, 1877), p. clxvii.

conspirators, said to have been led by direct representatives of Sir Gruffydd Llwyd, the hero of a previous protest against official tyranny. On hearing the news, the Prince immediately despatched John de Pirye and Richard de Stafford to inquire into the matter.[1]

The English populace of North Wales were evidently in a bad state. The burgesses of Carnarvon hastened to acquaint the Prince and his Council of the sadness of their case, and in so doing took care to recall the vilest actions of the Welsh, forgetting for the moment the complaints set forth by the commonalty of North Wales. In their petition,[2] the burgesses recorded the great damage done by the Welsh, to the utter destruction of his English ministers and burgesses in North Wales. They recalled the felonious attack on John de Huntyngdon, sometime sheriff of Merioneth, and the base robbery of his records and other personal chattels, and detailed the similar treatment of other bailiffs and English burgesses there. 'The Welsh,' they say, 'are so proud and malicious against your English people that they dare not move for fear of death; and now, good Lord, show their malice against Henry de Shaldeford, your attorney in those parts, as he was walking towards Carnarvon on Monday, the feast of St. Valentine last past, to fulfil the duties of his office, at the particular instigation of Tudor ap Gronow, and his brother Howel ap Gronow.' The Carnarvon burgesses go on to say: 'For the salvation of your castles, towns, and English burgesses, be pleased, sovereign Lord, to order immediate remedy, or else we shall be forced to quit the country.' The said Tudor and Howel, they further suggest, are so powerful that no Welshman dare indict them of the death of the said Henry, nor of any trespasses which they daily commit to the disturbance of the peace. Accordingly, the burgesses naïvely ask the Black Prince to supply an inquest of Englishmen to find the truth of the matter. Contemporary petitions from the burgesses of Conway[3] and Rhuddlan[4] relate the circumstances of the same event with more or less detail.

Henry Shaldeford was apparently making his way from the direction of Denbigh accompanied by six horsemen. Near the house of Howel ap Gronow, one of the celebrated stock of Penmynydd in Anglesea, Shaldeford was attacked by Tudor,

[1] *Ancient Correspondence* (P.R.O.), vol. liv., No. 36.
[2] *Ib.*, No. 41. [3] *Ib.*, No. 46. [4] *Ib.*, No. 42.

Howel's brother, and eighty armed Welshmen.. He was robbed of £100 and killed, and several of his companions were either slain or badly wounded. An almost simultaneous attack was made upon the English burgesses of Rhuddlan returning from the bishop's fair at St. Asaph. The general tone of the three petitions shows that the English burgesses in North Wales had never been in such a sorry plight.

A long list of the suspected conspirators was drawn up,[1] and a writ of aid was issued to William de Welham and Thomas de Missyngden to arrest Howel ap Gronow wherever found. Similar writs [2] were issued for the capture of all his accomplices, who were understood to be at large in England.[3] The burgesses do not seem to have gained much in answer to their petitions beyond a searching inquiry on the part of the English officials. There is no record that the North Welshmen were ever brought to book.

Richard de Stafford and John de Pirye made a prolonged progress through the Principality, holding inquests touching all the manors, fees, bailiwicks, lands, and tenements whatsoever in the Principality, and taking the oaths of fealty and attendance of all the subject populace and their ministers. The officers and burgesses of each borough swore homage to the Prince during the month of August 1343. In the boroughs of Beaumaris, Carnarvon, and Harlech the fealty of the officers and men of the counties of Anglesea, Carnarvon, and Merioneth was taken respectively. On this occasion, the attention of the constables was specially drawn to the condition of their castle garrisons, and the military position of the burgesses was carefully defined.[4]

The Prince's officers were most minute in their survey of the *regalia* of the Principality. Even the rights of the English burgesses were challenged, and were only allowed by the justices on the production of their charters and after a strenuous assertion of their privileges. This was a new experience for the boroughs. The details of the *quo warranto* proceedings of this date form part of the documents preserved in the *Record of Carnarvon*. The Black Prince was, of course, favourably disposed towards the boroughs, and gave extended privileges

[1] *Ancient Correspondence* (P.R.O.), vol. liv., Nos. 37-8.
[2] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1343-5, p. 492.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 500.
[4] See above, p. 108.

to more than one of them. He was the founder of the boroughs of Nevin and Pwllheli.

The racial antipathy, which appeared to be so pronounced at the beginning of his principate, seems to have gradually subsided with the progress of his rule. Public attention was apparently centred on the doings of the Black Prince and his Welsh soldiers abroad.[1] The Black Death, too, with its widespread devastation, exercised a quietening influence. On the whole, his principate was a comparatively peaceful one, but towards its close there were occasional rumours of foreign invasion by way of Wales. The prevailing causes of discontent during the latter half of the fourteenth century are social rather than political.

The rural districts of North Wales suffered considerably from the effects of the Black Death. Several townships were depopulated, and Welshmen, ill at ease, followed the Black Prince to his Continental campaigns. A general revolution now began in favour of the North Welsh bondmen, which tended gradually to revolutionise both the political character and the economic setting of the mediæval boroughs. The temporary respite of castle and other dues, granted for eleven years to the villein tenants of North Wales by the Black Prince, was to become a permanent one in the reign of Henry VII.[2]

The North Welsh boroughs present no symptoms of extraordinary depopulation in consequence of the Black Death. Unfortunately there is no direct evidence for the English boroughs. The effects resulting to them are, however, indicated in several directions. A readjustment of the former conditions of urban and rural life was inevitable. The changing relations of Capital and Labour made the adoption of town life more feasible to the local populace. The way was paved for the undoing of the old mediæval boroughs. The Black Prince, for political reasons, found it necessary to safeguard the interests of his castles and boroughs in North Wales by a renewal of the old Edwardian ordinances. The sustenance of the castle garrisons was placed upon its old footing, and the North Welshman was strictly enjoined to buy and sell in the borough mart of his district as formerly.[3]

During the period of gradual economic recovery following

[1] *E.g.* see *Gweithiau Iolo Goch* (C. Ashton), pp. 112-120, for a poem reviewing the military exploits of Edward III.'s reign.

[2] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1902-3, p. 45.

[3] See pp. 174-5 above.

the Black Death and the brilliant exploits of the Black Prince abroad, the North Welsh showed a great aversion to attend the local English markets. This action was possibly incident to the wider movement, which at a later date, through the renewed activity of the bards, assumed national proportions.

During the later years of the Black Prince's rule, the English authorities in Wales were face to face with the danger of concerted action on the part of the French and a noted Welshman named Owen ap Thomas ap Rhodri. The latter, a descendant of the royal line of the old Welsh princes, subordinated his domestic troubles to questions of national importance. He was to some extent favoured in this by the current and popular hope, entertained by the Welsh people, of expected relief from their social and political discontent by a chieftain from over the seas. There being no deliverer at home, the mediæval Welsh found it convenient, and not altogether dispiriting, to speak and think of one as coming from abroad.[1]

As early as 1360, we find special bowmen sent from Chester to the castle of Beaumaris with a view to thwarting the sinister movements of the 'enemies from France.'[2] The position was aggravated by the outbreak of war between France and England in 1369. Early in the May of this year, the castles of North Wales were strongly fortified, and on the 10th of November, a special survey was made of the respective garrisons on the pretext that 'our enemies from France and other adherents'[3] were about to invade the kingdom of England. A similar invasion was apprehended in 1370, but none took place.[4] Two years later, Owen of Wales (who was engaged in fighting English forces in France) issued his famous proclamation, coupling the redress of his personal grievances with a proposed restoration of the kingship of Wales. Propositions of this kind were apt to be popularly received in Wales at this time, when the native bards began to revive their military song, but Owen's attempt (as may be seen in the detailed account of the doings of Owen Lawgoch) came to nothing. Some of his North Welsh adherents suffered for their loyalty to his cause by losing their lands.[5] Dangers from the parts of France were again feared in 1377,[6]

[1] See ref. 1 on next page.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1149/9.
[3] *Fœdera*, iii. pt. 2, p. 867.
[4] *Ib.*, p. 901. Cf. *Harl. Roll*, E 7.
[5] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1899-1900, pp. 1-105. Cf. *ib.*, 1902-3, p. 37, n. 4.
[6] *Fœdera*, iii. pt. 2, p. 1075.

but Owen's tragic death in the next year, at once gave a permanent check to his personal efforts, and a temporary blow to the practical expression of that national sentiment which was being gradually imbued into the Welsh peasantry through the teaching of the local bards.

The doings of Owen ap Thomas ap Rhodri or Owen Lawgoch in foreign lands, flattered the oppressed tenantry of North Wales into the belief that he was their long-expected deliverer. Owen's shameful murder gave rise to many poems of lament by the national bards. Racial hatred in local circles was seemingly intensified by the fact that the perpetrator of this infamous deed was an Englishman. A spirit of hatred towards the Saxon enters the native poetry of the period at this point. The contemporary poems of Iolo Goch, the national bard, breathe a military strain hitherto unknown since the fall of Llywelyn the Last. Another bard, one Llywelyn ap Kynfrig Ddu of Anglesea, the island nursery of Welsh nationalism during this period, whilst deploring Owen's murder, inspired the people with the hopes of another Owen, a deliverer who was biding his time. When he really came there was to be war throughout Wales.[1]

The lively time thus promised for the English authorities did not come during the rule of Richard II., who, out of regard for the respect in which the Welsh people held his father, the Black Prince, was very popular in Wales.[2] His reign was attended with no extraordinary domestic troubles in North Wales. Some apprehension was caused at times through his strained relations with Scotland and Ireland.[3]

Richard, during his reign, instituted several important commissions of the peace to survey the condition of Wales and its people. The most notable of these belongs to the momentous year 1381.[4] From the first year of his reign, the North Welsh coast laboured under the fear of a possible Scottish invasion. In 1381 a band of Scots landed in Anglesea, and committed considerable damage to some of the houses of Beaumaris.[5] Additional precautions for defence were subsequently taken, particularly at Carnarvon, where special watchmen were told off for a period of nearly ten years, to ward the town by night as well as by day.[6] In 1386 a band of North Welshmen, about three hundred strong,

[1] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1899-1900, p. 93.
[2] *Wales*, p. 257.
[3] Cf. Morris's *Chester*, pp. 399-400.
[4] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1381-5, p. 17.
[5] *Min. Acc.* 1151/1-2.
[6] See above, pp. 117-18.

was levied for service in Scotland.[1] In the June of the same year, a muster was held in the borough of Conway of men-at-arms, archers, and others who had congregated there for service in Ireland. The ships of the North Welsh boroughs were requisitioned for the passage.[2]

Richard also made good use of the North Welsh castles for keeping some of his undesirable subjects. He despatched thirteen Lollards to the castle of Beaumaris in 1396.[3] John Claydon, skinner, a Lollard of London, was confined in the castle of Conway for two years, when Robert de Braybroke was Bishop of London.[4] The castles and boroughs of the district were destined later to witness the humiliating scenes connected with his deposition.

Towards the end of his kingship, Richard is said to have wandered like a hunted hare among the North Welsh castles. His varied experiences in North Wales have been graphically described, by a metrical writer of French extraction,[5] who shared the vicissitudes of his wanderings. The narrative gives noteworthy glimpses of the English boroughs.

Richard's expedition into Ireland in 1399 to avenge the death of Mortimer, paved the way for the return of Henry Bolingbroke, who aspired to the throne. The King, staying himself in Ireland, sent the Earl of Salisbury to Wales, with the object of raising troops to check Henry's successful progress. The Earl, according to the French chronicler, landed at Conway, which was then reputed to be the strongest and fairest town in Wales.[6] He found no difficulty in gathering together an enormous host of Welsh and Cheshire men, with whom Richard was very popular. This army soon became impatient at the King's protracted stay in Ireland, and taking him for dead, dispersed to their mountain homes, leaving the Earl of Salisbury with a small bodyguard of only about a hundred men. This sad news was communicated to Richard on his arrival at Conway with a small retinue, after a forced march, in the disguise of a friar, from Milford Haven.[7]

From Conway, where the houses are said to have been covered

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1214/11. [2] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1385-9, p. 163.
[3] *Min. Acc.* 1215/7. [4] *Archaeologia*, xx. p. 169, n. (*a*).
[5] Creton's 'Metrical History,' printed in *Archaeologia*, xx., translation and notes, pp. 13-242; text, pp. 295-433 (ed. Webb). Cf. Parry's *Royal Progresses, etc.*, pp. 189-214, for portion relating to North Wales.
[6] *Archaeologia*, xx. p. 315. [7] *Ib.*, p. 321.

with tiles,[1] Richard entered into negotiations with Henry Bolingbroke, whose unchecked progress had now brought him to Chester. John Holland, Earl of Exeter, and Thomas Holland, Earl of Surrey, were entrusted with the commission. In the meantime, Richard was acquainted of the dismemberment of his army in South Wales, and was almost overcome by the hopelessness of his case. He remained at Conway, all sorrowful, sad, and distressed, with two or three of his intimate friends.[2] After a while he betook himself for safety to the castle of Beaumaris, which, when provided with sufficient food and a capable garrison, was calculated to be equal to a siege of ten years.[3] He soon relinquished this stronghold again, and proceeded to the town of Carnarvon, which, says the French writer, had a noble castle, and was a place of strength. On one side stood an abundance of woods suitable for the chase, whilst the other side was surrounded by the sea. The castle was unfortunately badly furnished, there being not a farthing's worth of victuals within, and nothing better than straw for the ill-starred King to lie upon. After enduring this state of poverty for five or six days, Richard departed for Conway,[4] to await his treacherous betrayal by Northumberland into the hands of his enemy and rival to the throne, and his subsequent dethronement by Henry Bolingbroke, who succeeded him as King.

Upon Henry's succession to the throne Welsh politics take a new turn. Richard's reign had been one of comparative progress for the North Welsh boroughs. The bailiffs' returns show no signs of excessive depression. During the reign of Henry IV. they were called upon to defend the English cause in an unprecedented manner. This occurred, of course, in connection with the national revolt of Glyndwr. During the whole of Henry's reign the English boroughs in Wales were kept in a state of continued tension. The actual conflict, however, only lasted about five years in North Wales.

The Welsh, as we have already seen, had made several efforts to secure princes of their own during the course of the thirteenth century, and that with the ostensible object of improving their political and social condition. So long as the old political ideal was cherished by the native bards, and so long as there were burning grievances to be remedied, this remained the

[1] *Archaeologia*, xx. p. 323.
[2] *Ib.*, pp. 332-7.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 338.
[4] *Ib.*, p. 340.

favourite mode of expressing the united political effort of the Welsh. Iolo Goch, at the dawn of the revolt, voiced the general feeling of his race during the previous century when he sang :—

'Many a time have I desired
To see a lord of our kin.'[1]

His couplet supplied the keynote to the widespread revolt of Wales, which had its beginning in an unsatisfactory ending to one of those little duels of rights (so common to the Middle Ages) to lands in the Marches of North Wales, between Owen Glyndwr and Reginald de Grey.[2]

It is evident from what was going on in North Wales that the Welsh peasants were preparing for some great event. The old Edwardian ordinances were entirely set aside. Congregations and secret meetings in desolate and mountainous places were frequent. The Welsh populace were arming themselves in the hope of help from Scotland,[3] and also from the conviction that the Owen of their expectation had arrived. The position, in the eyes of the local chamberlain, was a most critical one. The North Welsh castles were ill-equipped and under-manned, and, much to the disgust of the English townsmen, the local farmers made a promiscuous sale of their cattle in order to buy arms.[4] The object of the revolt, in Owen's words, was 'to deliver the offspring of Wales out of the captivity of our English foes, who have for a long time past oppressed us and our ancestors.'[5]

The initial stages of the actual outbreak took place late in the summer of 1400.[6] By the January of 1401, we find the English Parliament, alive to the importance of checking it in its infancy, taking care to promulgate ordinances of the Edwardian type for the future government of the Principality.[7] The first incident of burghal interest was the fall of Conway in the early spring of 1401. The Welsh insurgents, under the dual leadership of William and Rhys ap Tudor, descendants of the ever famous stock of Penmynydd, took advantage of the garrison's absence in church, and possessed themselves of the castle on the morning

[1] *Gweithiau Iolo Goch* (C. Ashton, 1896), p. 194.
[2] *Owen Glyndwr* (Bradley), p. 111.
[3] Ellis's *Orig. Letters* (Second Series), i. pp. 8-9.
[4] *Ib.*, p. 48, n. 3.
[5] Parry, *op. cit.*, p. 220.
[6] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1399-1401, p. 357; *Owen Glyndwr* (Bradley), p. 125.
[7] *Rot. Parl.*, p. 457.

of Good Friday 1401.[1] The castle remained in the occupation of the Welsh for some time. The early efforts of Hotspur at its reduction by arms proved futile. The Welsh occupants were then subjected to a prolonged siege by the English forces. As early as the 13th of April, Hotspur was commissioned to treat with the rebels in the castle, but the proffered conditions were not acceptable to the Welsh.[2] Towards the end of the month, the Welsh, owing to lack of supplies, made overtures for peace on condition of a free pardon, which the royal authorities, now stationed at Chester, rightly refused to grant. An agreement was finally arrived at early in July, on the ground of the unconditional surrender of a number of the garrison to Hotspur's troops, by whom they were slaughtered after the brutal fashion of the time. The rest of the garrison had their lives and a free pardon. The capitulation at this date was unexpected by the English authorities, who contemplated employing a force of more than four hundred men until the Michaelmas following, with the view of extracting more favourable terms for the English.[3]

The local justiciar, Henry Percy, the famous Hotspur, underestimated the seriousness of the Welsh rising. After the recapture of Conway, and a hurried march to the neighbourhood of Cader Idris, he abandoned all his appointments in Wales.[4] Owen Glyndwr was very active in South Wales [5] at this time, and with the departure of Hotspur his cause gathered strength. The district of North Wales was in a particularly turbulent state, and Scottish cruisers in the Menai Straits were threatening the towns of Carnarvon and Beaumaris.[6] In the autumn the King entered Wales with a large army, which on the 9th of October was stationed at Carnarvon, where Bolde and a hundred men were prepared for any emergency. The King encountered no enemy on the journey, the Welsh, according to their custom, having withdrawn to their mountain fastnesses. He disbanded his army before the end of October.[7]

Lord Rutland was now appointed to the office of governor of

[1] For particulars see *Chronicon Adae de Usk* (ed. E. Maunde Thompson), p. 61.
[2] *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1399-1401, pp. 470, 475.
[3] *Royal Letters of Henry IV.* (ed. Hingeston), I., Introduction, pp. xxiv.-xxvi., and pp. 69-72.
[4] *Owen Glyndwr* (Bradley), p. 141. [5] *Ib.*, p. 142.
[6] *Chester in the Plantagenet and Tudor Period* (R. H. Morris), p. 43.
[7] *Owen Glyndwr* (Bradley), p. 151.

North Wales. Favoured by the approaching winter, Glyndwr, about this time, made a sudden dash for the north, and laid siege to the castle and town of Carnarvon. His attack was repulsed with considerable loss. Bolde, with the aid of the townsmen, easily held the upper hand. Adam of Usk describes the episode thus: 'On the morrow of All Hallows (Nov. 2), Owen, seeking to lay siege to Carnarvon, there in the midst of a great host unfurled his standard, a golden dragon on a white field, but being attacked by those within he was put to flight losing 300 men.'[1] It was during this winter campaign of Owen that the English cause in North Wales found the political value of its castellated boroughs. Outside Criccieth, Harlech, Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris, the North Welsh counties were entirely at the command of Owen. The inhabitants of the royal bond vills had fled into the Marches for protection,[2] and the burgesses of Bala, Newborough, Nevin, and Pwllheli, were unequal to the task of repelling his onslaughts. Adam of Usk makes a special note of Owen's prominent position in the north during the winter of 1401-2, and he is represented as exercising sovereign jurisdiction over the shires of Carnarvon and Merioneth.[3] Harlech almost fell into his hands in the month of December, but the timely appearance of four hundred archers with one hundred men-at-arms from Chester effected a speedy relief.[4]

Throughout the spring of 1402 Owen was having things pretty much his own way in the rural districts of North Wales. In a letter dated the 30th of May 1402, Prince Henry reports that the castle of Harlech was being hotly besieged.[5] Some respite was gained by Owen's temporary withdrawal to the Marches. As soon as he succeeded in capturing Edmund Mortimer and alluring him over to his side, he returned again to the investment of the castles on the Merioneth and Carnarvon coasts.[6]

The year 1403 saw Glyndwr's star in the ascendant, but, do what he could, the stubborn garrisons of North Wales, gaining strength from their sea connections, held their charge. Towards the close of this year Owen endeavoured to surmount this

[1] *Chronicon Adae de Usk*, p. 61.
[2] *Trans. R.H.S.* (New Series), xvii. p. 138, n. 1.
[3] *Chronicon*, p. 70.
[4] Morris's *Chester*, p. 43.
[5] *Acts of the Privy Council* (ed. Nicolas), ii. p. 63. (The date of letter is doubtful.)
[6] *Owen Glyndwr* (Bradley), p. 175.

difficulty, by co-operating with the Breton and French fleet that appeared in Carmarthen Bay.[1] The first combined attack on Carnarvon in November 1403 proved a failure. During this assault both of the men-at-arms in the town garrison fell.[2] One of these was the celebrated Ieuan ap Meredith, whose brother was at the same time engaged with the opposing forces. The exact date of his death was the 4th of November 1403. Cathrall, the late historian of North Wales,[3] is wrong in assigning this event to 1402. The other man-at-arms, Richard de Pykenvere, was killed on the walls of the town of Carnarvon on the 10th of November 1403,[4] at the time when the assault was made on the town by the French and the Welsh. The second attack took place early in the next year.

In the meantime, between the first and second assaults on the town of Carnarvon, the Welsh and their French allies betook themselves in great force to the island of Anglesea, and carried off, by day as by night, all manner of beasts, corn, goods, and chattels to their national granary in the recesses of the Snowdon hills. On the morrow of St. Hilary, the Welsh and French to the number of two hundred, made a sally upon the Welsh sheriff of Anglesea, who, with a retinue of fifty persons, was proceeding from Beaumaris castle to levy debts and perform other duties pertaining to his office. Meredith ap Kenwrig, the sheriff, was killed, and several of his followers, including ten expert bowmen of the local garrison, were carried away to Owen, who, after the failure of his recent attempt at Carnarvon, had apparently withdrawn to the district of Snowdon.[5]

About the middle of January 1404,[6] Owen and the French threw themselves with all their force against the town of Carnarvon. The garrison, through want of men and victuals, was in a precarious position. The besiegers were well equipped with engines, saws, and scaling-ladders of great length, and succeeded in doing considerable damage to the town property. Their attempt at reducing the town turned out a dismal failure, the plucky garrison under its sub-constable, Parry, thwarting all their efforts. So necessary was the service of every available man during the progress of the siege, that a woman had perforce

[1] *Henry IV.* (Wylie), i. p. 377.
[2] *Exchqr. K.R. Acc.* 43/24.
[3] *Hist. of North Wales*, i. p. 210.
[4] *Exchqr. K.R. Acc.* 43/24.
[5] *Royal and Hist. Letters* (ed. Hingeston), ii. p. 15.
[6] Ellis's *Orig. Letters* (Second Series), i. p. 33.

to be despatched to Chester to inform the governor of their distressed condition.

Straightway after his failure at Carnarvon, Owen proceeded to complete his investment of Harlech. William Hunt, the local constable, with two of his servants, had already been captured and carried away by the Welsh early in the year. On the 15th of January the castle was said to be in great jeopardy. There were serious misunderstandings between the members of the garrison, the majority of whom were Welshmen. By the time of Owen's arrival from Carnarvon, the number of the garrison was reduced to sixteen.[1] Owen successfully negotiated with these, and took possession of the castle. This success marked the hey-day of his revolt. He made Harlech his capital for the next three years, and held one of his national Parliaments there.[2] Welsh courtiers, lords, and priests visited his household, which also included members of the Mortimer family, on several occasions. The celebrated Iolo Goch, the nation's contemporary bard, is said to have had a personal interview with Owen at Harlech during this juncture.[3]

During 1405, the year of Welsh reverses, no incident of note took place in North Wales. The active campaign was confined to the southern districts of Wales, as they were again during the next year. The men of Anglesea, to the number of two thousand and more, came to the King's peace at Beaumaris on the 10th of November 1406. They paid pardon fines amounting to £537. 7s.[4] The inhabitants of Carnarvon and Merioneth still remained faithful to Owen. Special efforts were made during the year 1407 to reduce Harlech. Small field armies were stationed in North Wales, and a considerable fleet patrolled the coast.[5] The castle ultimately fell into the hands of Gilbert and John Talbot, who with a force of a thousand strong and a long siege train effected the surrender.[6] During the progress of the siege a naval duel took place between the English and the Welsh. A London fishmonger, carrying goods for victualling the besiegers, was captured and robbed by the Welsh seamen.[7]

[1] Ellis's *Orig. Letters* (Second Series), vol. i. pp. 31, 33, 35.
[2] Wylie, *op. cit.*, ii. p. 297.
[3] *Owen Glyndwr* (Bradley), p. 234 (? evidence).
[4] *Hist. of North Wales* (Cathrall), pp. 221-2.
[5] *Min Acc.* 1216/2; *D.K. Report*, xxxvi., Appendix ii., p. 14.
[6] *Owen Glyndwr* (Bradley), pp. 295-6.
[7] *Acts of the Privy Council* (ed. Nicolas), ii. p. 139.

Edmund Mortimer died during or soon after the siege, and Glyndwr's wife and children were conveyed to London.

After the restoration of Harlech into the hands of the English Crown, Owen gave no considerable trouble to the English authorities in North Wales. The local inhabitants soon came to the King's peace, paying large fines to secure the free pardon offered them. After 1408, the boroughs exhibit signs of gradual recovery from their vicissitudes during the actual revolt, and the Crown begins to receive some of its normal revenue that had been practically withheld during the first ten years of the reign.[1]

The varying experiences of the North Welsh castles and boroughs during the progress of the actual conflict have now been told. The eminently successful stand which they made on behalf of the English cause is obvious. The real damages sustained to borough properties, and the personal losses involved to individual burgesses in the venture, are outlined in a previous chapter.[2] It now remains to see how far the revolt affected the political status of the English burgesses and that of the North Welsh populace.

The English boroughs were nominally reinstated in their old environment of 1294, as were the people of North Wales. The restrictive or penal statutes of Henry IV., enacted in connection with Glyndwr's revolt, were in a sense an up-to-date edition of the old-time ordinances of Edward I. In the midst of the political excitement of 1401, the English Commons[3] showed an intense desire to enact repressive laws against the Welsh.

The severity of these Lancastrian statutes, apart from a consideration of their origin, and of the particular circumstances under which they were promulgated, is apt to be overrated. That due prominence should be given to the coercive ordinances of Edward I. on the outbreak of any serious political trouble in the Principality, was almost inevitable. The fact that the English sovereign renewed them at a time when Owen's revolt had not yet reached its zenith, rather than after it, is significant. It reveals the political and temporizing character of these ordinances, which must be borne in mind when estimating their effect. The temporary and *ad hoc* character of the

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1261/2, and *Acts of the Privy Council* (ed. Nicolas), ii. p. 90.
[2] Ch. vi. above.
[3] *Rot. Parl.*, iii. pp. 457, 476.

majority of them is unmistakable. They were deemed valuable weapons for the successful suppression of the Welsh rebellions. And with the cessation of hostilities, it was probable that the worst of the penal statutes of Henry IV. had been seen. True they remained on the Statute Book in theory long after the Act of Union,[1] but it is tolerably certain that they had ceased in practice long before the latter Act became law. It is difficult to associate the fifteenth-century progress [2] of the Welsh with a rigid enforcement of the Lancastrian statutes. The evidence of their actual application is somewhat meagre. In view of this general dearth of evidence, one author has expressed a doubt as to whether they were really enforced at all.[3] The consideration of this point in its relation to the English boroughs of North Wales, brings us to the interesting question of their population.

The gradual Cymricising of the burghal privilege forms one important phase in the political evolution of the English boroughs in Mediæval Wales. By this process of Cymricising we do not mean that the whole or even a part of any borough populace became entirely Welsh, but rather we imply the extension to Welshmen of the right of municipal privileges in the English boroughs of North Wales in particular, and of Wales in general. The process, being one of law and fact, was neither regular nor symmetrical. We find Welshmen admitted to some boroughs and at the same time excluded from others. The political judgment of the local English authority generally determined the admission.

The commonalty of North Wales, by virtue of the Edwardian ordinances, was denied the legal right of admission into the English boroughs of Conway, Carnarvon, Criccieth, Beaumaris, Newborough, Harlech, and Bala.[4] The boroughs of Nevin and Pwllheli, founded later by the Black Prince, were thoroughly Welsh, the inhabitants throughout being primarily the descendants of the native tenants of the old maenors. The Cymricising process here was merely one of law. In the parallel manorial boroughs of Newborough and Bala the case was somewhat different. Bala was throughout more English than Newborough. Both contained the nucleus of a Welsh sympathy (Newborough being almost entirely Welsh) from the start,

[1] The majority were repealed by Stat. 21 James. I., s. 11.
[2] *Hist. of the Welsh Church* (E. J. Newell), p. 385; *Little England beyond Wales* (Laws), p. 209.
[3] See Laws, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-9.
[4] *Rec. of Carn.*, p. 137.

which, by the fact of their comparative unimportance as military and political centres, was not likely to decrease. They ceased to rank as English boroughs from about the end of the fourteenth century. The Cymricising was naturally slower and more liable to official interruption in the castellated boroughs, especially in those of such paramount importance as Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris. For all political purposes, the latter were the only real English towns after the revolt of Glyndwr.

Generally speaking, the manorial boroughs were more in sympathy with the country people than were the castellated towns. This sentiment is to some extent illustrated in the native literature of the period. Davydd ap Gwilym has every praise for the manorial borough of Newborough in the latter half of the fourteenth century,[1] whilst Lewis Glyn Cothi has nothing but satire for the castellated borough of Flint a century later.[2] The Edwardian ordinances evidently varied in the degree and extent of their application, which was apparently determined by the political atmosphere of the period, and in some part modified by the character of the borough.

The political fluctuations of the period are revealed in the statutory conditions. The strict ordinances of Edward I. after the revolt of 1294, subsiding during the later fourteenth century, were temporarily revived by Henry IV. in thwarting the insurrection of Glyndwr, and again by Henry VI. in quelling a local riot. The ordinances, from the point of view of their exercise, partook of the character of temporary coercion acts for the purpose of coping with the Welsh nation at times of political trouble. Excepting the cases of the more important castellated boroughs, they do not appear to have actually debarred many mediæval Welshmen from the amenities of burghal life.

The intention which may be legitimately read into the original ordinances, is that the specified boroughs were to be English rather than Welsh in sympathy. At the time of the conquest, when racial feeling was intense, this was tantamount to enacting that they should be inhabited solely by pure Englishmen. During periods of political tension, when differences of race became accentuated, this ordinance was put into literal effect; but during the intervals of comparative quiet, the intention of the

[1] *Barddoniaeth Dafydd ab Gwilym*, 1873 (ed. Cynddelw), p. 193.
[2] *Hist. of Lit. of Wales* (C. Wilkins), pp. 122-4.

ordinance, namely, the creation of loyal boroughs irrespective of race, came into operation.

During these periods of apparent tranquillity there were social and other forces at work silently welding Welsh and English into common sympathy. The disappearance of racial animosity was concomitant with the development of Welsh loyalty. We may enumerate some of the attenuating forces that gradually assimilated the urban and rural peoples of North Wales.

Among the many points upon which the North Welsh coroners were to institute regular and strict inquiry, there appear two which indicate the means by which the English boroughs became Welsh. The coroners were to inquire of lands and tenements held by Englishwomen, who, being free burgesses, had married Welshmen, and further, of lands held by Englishmen, who, being free burgesses, had married Welshwomen. The same officers were also instructed to keep a strict eye on all borough lands held by persons of Welsh extraction.[1] It is worthy of note here, that we have one interesting instance of a Welsh bondman marrying an English widow-burgess at Pwllheli, who, on paying a fine of a florin was allowed to enjoy the full complement of burghal privileges.[2] The North Welsh boroughs were hardly of sufficient economic importance to countenance the incoming of a considerable Welsh influence, by virtue of the exercise of a clause in their original charters sanctioning the freedom of villeins upon residence of a year and a day. Intermarriage, and the acquisition of borough lands by the Welsh, appear to have been the chief factors that undermined the hard and fast decrees of Edward's political ordinances.

The foreign wars of the period are said to have exercised some influence in this direction.[3] Welsh and English fought side by side at Dunbar and Crecy, at Bannockburn and Poitiers. Several fighting Welshmen brought their foreign loyalty back with them into North Wales. An early ordinance stipulated that the castle garrisons should contain pure Englishmen only,[4] but from the middle of the fourteenth century it is very common to find Welshmen among the garrisons. We can only surmise the indirect result of this upon the racial populace of the

[1] *Rec. of Carn.*, pp. 241-2.
[2] *Min. Acc.* 1175/3.
[3] E.g. *Owen Glyndwr* (Bradley), p. 81.
[4] Cf. *Hist. of Aberconway* (Williams), p. 152.

boroughs. If Welsh and English were taught common fighting for a time, it is but natural to expect some progress in the direction of common working for term of life. The fact, however, that Welshmen entered the garrisons of the English castles seems to show that it was no longer so much a case of English against Welsh, as of loyal versus disloyal subjects. Differentiation of race was not so entirely tantamount to a corresponding differentiation in sympathy.

The Welsh, so far as the acquisition of burghal privileges was concerned, were evidently welcomed by the Crown in proportion to the loyalty shown by them. This, however, was not the sole determinant of the growth of Welsh interests. We have also to bear in mind the opposition of the English burgesses *qua* burgesses to the progress of the movement, and the desire on the part of Welshmen to participate in town life during the Middle Ages.

The English burgesses naturally endeavoured to preserve the integrity of their privileges. The inhabitants of the castellated boroughs were particularly keen on this point. They were loth to suffer any diminution of their economic and commercial status, and literally shuddered at the thought of their Leet juries being packed with Welshmen. Boroughs of political import, as we relate below, persisted in this objection to a late date.[1]

As to the Welshmen, it cannot be said that they earnestly applied themselves to settle in towns and engage in commerce, until the Tudor period.[2] Up to this time, the North Welsh boroughs had no overwhelming advantages to offer the Welsh peasant above what was afforded him in rural pursuits. The burning desire of the North Welshmen throughout, particularly during the latter half of the fifteenth century, was not so much to enter the boroughs, as to partake of the privileges of the English burgesses in North Wales. They desired to hold lands in the boroughs as Englishmen did; they wished to be eligible for offices of charge as were Englishmen; they aspired to the right of becoming burgesses anywhere; they required an equal system of judicial remedy, and above all, craved for exemption, like the burgesses, from commercial and feudal tolls.[3] The acquisi-

[1] See below, p. 265 *et seq.*

[2] Humphrey Llwyd, *Commentarioli Britannicae Descriptionis Fragmentum* (1572), pp. 49-50.

[3] See above, chs. iv.-vi., and p. 270 below.

tion of these privileges was apparently regarded as a provisional satisfaction of their longing for denizen privileges of the English realm.

Having surveyed the general conditions, we may now add a brief summary of the more important statistical and other data relating to the peopling of the English boroughs in North Wales during the period of settlement.

There was but a very small proportion of the native populace among the early inhabitants of the castellated boroughs, most of them being adventitious families from divers towns in England and the Welsh Marches.[1] With the exception of Criccieth, the documents of the castle boroughs show an insignificant number of Welshmen throughout the fourteenth century. As many as eight of the local jury at Criccieth in 1374 bear Welsh names.[2] In the same reign it was found necessary to have some Welshmen removed.[3]

A similar difficulty was experienced at Beaumaris, which borough, in its earlier years, was being continually threatened with a Welsh immigration. The Crown made persistent efforts to stay the danger. Out of ninety names given in the earliest rental[4] of the town in the time of Edward I., only five can be said to be distinctively Welsh. By the reign of Edward III., the racial proportion of the town populace had undergone a considerable change, and that apparently through the alienation of lands within the borough liberty by English burgesses to Welshmen. Edward III., early in his reign, found it necessary through his local justiciar, Edward de Bohun, to issue a special injunction forbidding the English burgesses of Beaumaris to demise burgages and lands to Welshmen, without first obtaining the King's licence. All lands hitherto misappropriated in this fashion were to be immediately restored into the hands of the Crown. The local community seemingly ignored the tenor of this order, with the result that by the time of the Black Prince, it is generally stated that the greater part of the burgesses of Beaumaris were Welshmen. The Welsh element predominated to such an extent as to threaten the utter undoing of the town liberty. The Crown was on many scores deprived of its revenue.

[1] For names see Appendices below.

[2] *Harl. MS.*, 1954, f. 51. The Leet jurors during the reign of Edward II. were mostly Englishmen (*Court Rolls*).

[3] *Add. MS.*, 33,372, f. 6*a*.

[4] *Rentals and Surveys* (P.R.O.), Roll 767.

The deputy-justice of North Wales, understanding this, summoned a general assembly of the local burgesses, who at once admitted the irregular use of their privileges, which were accordingly temporarily suspended. They were all summoned to the next sessions to know the Prince's will in this behalf. John de Cokey and other burgesses, including the noted Welsh burgess Anian ap Ieuan, represented the borough in the Prince's court at Carnarvon, and on the payment of a fine of twenty shillings, were allowed to enjoy their privileges until the following session.[1] The details of subsequent proceedings are now lost. The ultimate verdict apparently effected a restitution of the usual privileges, with a proviso enjoining strict attention to English interests. It is certain that the English element held the upper hand during the latter half of the fourteenth century[2] and subsequently. After the revolt of Glyndwr the borough is classified as one of the three English walled towns of the North Welsh Principality.

At Carnarvon and Conway, the two remaining English walled towns, Welsh names are exceedingly few throughout, as is the case at Bala for some time. The mediæval documents of Carnarvon and Conway contain a slight sprinkling of Welsh names; the town bailiffs are almost invariably Englishmen. The original burgesses of Bala were mostly Englishmen of Mortimer's following. During the fifteenth century the local names show an increasing Welsh tendency, though the old Holland, Broughton, and Collier families continue to have several prominent representatives during the reign of Edward IV. The parallel manorial borough of Newborough (whither a colony of Welshmen had been transferred at the outset), as far as the actual names of burgesses go, was almost Welsh to a man from the commencement.

The preceding remarks represent the general impression left with us by the names met with in documents relating to the respective boroughs, during the periods mentioned. One thing is evident. The literal purport of the Edwardian ordinances was defeated at many points between the conquest and the enactment of the Lancastrian statutes. It was to this practice that the English commons, in part, assigned the Welsh troubles that called for their immediate attention on the accession of Henry IV.

[1] *Exchqr. A.O. Misc. Book*, No. 166, f. 16.
[2] Cf. *Beaumaris Bay, etc.* (by R. Llwyd), p. 19 n.

Welshmen were laxly allowed by the authorities to hold offices that would have been more secure in the hands of Englishmen, and in a similar manner, some kind of Welsh sympathy had crept into the life of several English boroughs in Wales. The Welsh, from about the middle of the fourteenth century, seem as a nation to have become more attached to town life. By 1380 Welsh immigration to boroughs had assumed such proportions as to render it a serious menace to the prospects of the Englishry in Wales.

It would appear that several Welshmen, with the economic changes accompanying the Black Death, betook themselves across the English border, some setting up as burgesses in the Marcher boroughs, and some taking employment as labourers on English manors. There was no legal obstruction to Welshmen settling in English boroughs in England provided they found sufficient security for their good behaviour. This was the royal will in 1380.[1] The Welsh element was proportionately larger in the Marcher boroughs than what it was in the walled towns of the Principality. The native inhabitants were attracted more to the larger towns on the English March than to the small garrison vills of the North Welsh Principality. The latter were, of course, more rigidly guarded, and offered a less fruitful field for commerce and plunder. The Commons, in 1380,[2] by way of remedial check to the Welsh colonisation of the English Marcher boroughs, make the strange plea that the Edwardian ordinances were still in force. Nominally, these only extended to English boroughs in the Principality; it was not until the issue of the Lancastrian statutes that they really extended to English boroughs in England.

Reviewing the racial position of the North Welsh boroughs at the beginning of the fifteenth century, it will be observed that the manorial boroughs of Nevin, Pwllheli, and Newborough, were to all intents and purposes thoroughly Welsh, and Bala was about to become more so. The minor castellated boroughs of Criccieth and Harlech, too, contained a considerable Celtic element, which, with the destruction of the castle of Criccieth during the progress of the revolt, and the discontinuance of Harlech as a paramount garrison town, was likely to increase with the progress of the century. Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris, from political considerations, were more entirely

[1] *Rot. Parl.*, iii. p. 81. [2] *Ibid.*

English in character, only harbouring an occasional loyal Welshman. These three boroughs presented a closed door to the North Welshman at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and very unwillingly acquiesced in the admittance of Welshmen into the neighbouring boroughs. Soon after the close of the century, these same boroughs voluntarily agreed to the acquisition of burghal privileges by North Welshmen in English boroughs situated in localities other than their own. About the same time they were reluctantly obliged, through the grant of a charter to the men of North Wales, to open their own liberties. This last phase of the Cymricising process may be conveniently related in connection with the general political story of the boroughs, from the cessation of the revolt of Glyndwr to the promulgation of the Act of Union.

The century following the revolt of Glyndwr is one of gradual political progress for the Welsh. This does not imply that it was a century of domestic peace. The national rebellion inevitably intensified racial differences. An eminent authority states that the anti-Saxon character of Welsh poetry during the years 1415-85 is unmatched by that of any other period.[1] The circumstances of the revolt bequeathed many new disturbing elements to the local conditions of life in North Wales. A revengeful attitude, hitherto less noticeable, comes into immediate prominence. The Welsh, we are told, inflicted their vengeance upon such of the English as had slain or had in some way injured their friends and relations in the late war. The Englishry were subjected to arbitrary treatment by various kinds of distress and imprisonment. The Welsh, relying on their superior numbers, found their old legal custom of *assache* to be a useful instrument of torture. One of the first Welsh acts of Henry v. was the abolition of this feature of Welsh law in the interests of his faithful liege people of Wales, both Welshmen as well as Englishmen.[2]

The North Welsh boroughs were not subjected to any serious political troubles during the reign of Henry v. The King himself was mostly engaged with his foreign campaigns. The administration of North Wales was in the good hands of Gilbert, Lord Talbot, who, more than any other man, did most to pacify the district after Owen's rebellion. Talbot reorganised the manorial boroughs, and placed the castellated towns on a firmer footing.

[1] *Trans. Cym. Soc.*, 1899-1900, p. 83. [2] Stat. 1 Henry v., c. 6.

He subjected the inhabitants of the three counties of Carnarvon, Merioneth, and Anglesea to double fines in respect of their absolute pardon for participation in the revolt, and for the restoration to them of their lands as completely as if the rebellion of Wales had not taken place. A transmarine interest was infused into local politics by Henry's call upon the North Welshmen to support his expedition into the parts of Normandy. Altogether they contributed a sum amounting to nearly four thousand marks. French prisoners, taken in the celebrated battle of Agincourt, were drafted in parties of four to the castles of Conway and Carnarvon.[1]

The Welsh people took full advantage of the civil and political disturbances of the reign of Henry VI. to improve their social and political condition. The central government was too much engrossed with English affairs, at home and abroad, to pay effective attention to Wales. The Welsh villein made strenuous efforts to bring himself in line with parallel movements across the border, and the persistent struggle of the Welsh populace to acquire denizen privileges went on apace. The English boroughs, however, were put to no considerable inconvenience until wellnigh the end of the reign, when circumstances attending local discontent, and the wider discord of the houses of York and Lancaster, made their position somewhat critical.

In 1436, an important dispute occurred between the royal tenants of Merioneth and their baronial neighbours in the Marcher lands of Powys. It occasioned considerable anxiety to the English officials at Carnarvon and Harlech. The local accounts for the year (1436)[2] detail the costs preliminary to the convocation of a general assembly of the rival tenants for *The Day of Redress*, which was fixed to take place on a well-known Merionethshire mountain called Carnedd Howell. The negotiations that took place on this Day of Redress seemingly came to nothing. Representatives of the rival tenantry were summoned to appear in London in the autumn of 1443. On the 12th of August in this year, a parley took place at Harlech between Henry Norres, then deputy-chamberlain at Carnarvon, and the gentry of Merioneth, with a view to arranging peace between the tenants of the King and the tenants of Richard, Duke of York. The Merioneth representatives were chosen at Harlech in October, and were forthwith conducted by Henry

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1216/3. [2] *Ibid.*

Norres and a retinue of six soldiers to London, to appear before the King's council on the Octave of St. Martin. On the 11th of January in the next year, Henry Norres again journeyed from Carnarvon to Harlech to issue a proclamation against one John Turburville.[1] Further research may result in placing these facts in their proper setting. One should like to know more about this John Turburville. About the same time, the maritime boroughs of North Wales were being threatened by the restless Scots. A special patrol of horsemen reconnoitred the coast during these years.[2]

Favoured by the strained circumstances of Henry's position, the Welsh made renewed efforts to improve their position. In the very hour of their last defeat, the native bards still held out the hopes of the coming of yet another deliverer of the line of Brutus. Until this prophecy was satisfactorily fulfilled, there was always a wavering in Welsh loyalty, and a corresponding uncertainty in the politics of the local English boroughs. The vast social and economic revolution that was going on gave an additional impulse, as well as a somewhat changed character to the old conflict of the fourteenth century. The movement in the direction of the equalisation of classes,[3] by becoming involved with the struggle for the equalisation of citizen privileges, must have minimised the racial character of the conflict. Matters of economic rather than of racial moment explain the predominant politics of North Wales during the later fifteenth century.

Towards the middle of that century, the English Commons had to confront a wholesale desire on the part of Welshmen to become denizen subjects, or in their own words, to be of the same liberty as Englishmen in Wales. The North Welsh tenants were especially bent on acquiring the liberties of the English townsmen in North Wales. Indeed, something like an organised revolt on the part of the commonalty of North Wales was feared. The local authorities were of the opinion that the Welsh were more riotous than ever before. In consequence, the English castles in North Wales were furnished with additional soldiers.[4]

The chief opposition to this Cymric emancipation, as we should expect, came from the side of the English burgesses, and that, perhaps, with adequate cause. The Welshmen of Anglesea and

[1] *Min. Acc.* 1216/7.
[2] *Ib.*, 1216/4.
[3] *Wales*, p. 243.
[4] See pp. 109-12 above.

the burgesses of Beaumaris had been on particularly bad terms for a very long time. Common incidents on local market and fair days were persistent affrays between the English and the Welsh. The most notable of these local squabbles is known to contemporary literature as the Black Affray of Beaumaris—*Y Ffrae Ddu yn y Bewmares.* During this remarkable outburst, a famous Welshman, David ap Ieuan ap Howel of the neighbouring mansion of Llwydiarth, who championed the Welsh cause, was slain.[1]

The general position had become aggravated by 1442. In a petition of this date, the English burgesses of the North Welsh towns beg a renewal of the old restrictive ordinances, with the view of staying the Cymricising of their burghal privileges. The Privy Council[2] immediately acceded to their request. The petition is interesting as illustrating the gradual exercise by the Welsh of the privileges of office and borough, despite the so-called harsh enactments of Henry IV. It appears from this, that it had become the usual custom for Welshmen to sue for letters patent[3] making them denizen subjects, thereby legally exempting them from the inconveniences of the penal statutes. It is also gratifying to find in a parallel petition, a plea of exception on the part of the English burgesses, in favour of two eminent Welshmen, William Bulkeley and Griffith ap Nicholas. We have here the possibility, at least, of a wider and more comprehensive reconciliation.[4]

In their preamble to the preceding petition, the burgesses preface a general résumé of their position since the days of Henry IV. The Welsh, they say, incensed at Henry V.'s unwise policy of granting forfeited lands to Englishmen rather than to Welshmen, truly menaced them throughout for the slaughter and destruction of their ancestors in the last rebellion. The custom of admitting natives to equal privileges with the burgesses further led to sorry results both in the constitution and verdicts of local juries. To English burgesses of the time, there was a no more evident injustice than that Welshmen, with whom they had no favour, but great dispute of heart,

[1] Llwyd, *Beaumaris Bay*, as on p. 259 above.

[2] *Acts of the Privy Council* (ed. Nicolas), v. p. 211. Cf. *Rot. Parl.*, v. pp. 53-4.

[3] See Calendar of MSS. relating to Wales in the British Museum (E. Owen), ii. pp. 145, 151.

[4] *Rot. Parl.*, v. p. 104.

countenance, and mind, should be allowed to adjudge on their bodies and lives.

With the express object of allaying the proverbial pomp and pride exercised by the mediæval Welsh in this connection, the Commons, in 1444,[1] ordered a strict observance, in all points, of every ordinance previously enacted against the Welsh. The situation was not much improved. Three years later (1447),[2] the Commons again sanctioned this order, and added a further ordinance, to the effect that all franchises, markets, fairs, liberties to buy and sell within the towns of North Wales, made to any Welshman before this date, should be void and of no value. The same statute contained a section which perhaps more than any other, shows the chief cause of unrest in North Wales at this time. It specially refers to the North Welsh villeins, who were no longer so obedient to the commands of the royal stewards in the performance of their labour and service dues.

These statutes of Henry VI., though against the Welsh, undoubtedly point to Welsh progress. The very necessity for renewing the old ordinances shows that their literal content was not rigidly adhered to. The Welsh were apparently allowed to exercise, either by sufferance or by force, privileges that were legally forbidden them. The walled towns of Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris succeeded in keeping their privileges fairly well intact, by reason of their strong military position, and perhaps, too, by the moral and legal support of the old Edwardian ordinances. The latter, however, were becoming more fictional and effete in purpose and effect with the progress of the fifteenth century.

Circumstances attending the Wars of the Roses ultimately turned this negative tide of restrictive law in favour of Wales, to the special advantage of the North Welshmen. There were two reasons why the Welsh people revelled in the Wars of the Roses. The struggle, except in its later stages, was not confined to Welsh soil, and the opportunity afforded for fighting near home gave new vent to their warlike spirit. Welshmen fought for York and for Lancaster. The three North Welsh counties had a decided leaning towards the Lancastrian side. By October 1461, the progress of the civil war had been so favourable to Edward IV., that he was master of all England and Wales

[1] *Rot. Parl.*, v. p. 104. [2] *Ib.*, v. pp. 138-9.

except Harlech castle,[1] which was strenuously held by Welshmen in the Lancastrian interest. The magnificent stand made by the Welsh captain, David ap Eignon, on behalf of the Red Rose, and the celebrated siege that led to the fall of the castle on the fourteenth day of August 1468, are well known to history.[2] So far as North Wales is concerned, this temporary occupation of Harlech by the Welsh is the only respite from a monotonous tale of increased precautions by the North Welsh authorities in aid of the Yorkist cause. The local garrisons were replenished with men and victual,[3] and the burgesses generally experienced some difficulty in paying their ordinary rents.[4]

In the subsequent turn of affairs in favour of Lancaster, the North Welsh found themselves supporting a famous personage of the old Anglesea stock, which had already provided so many champions of the Welsh cause against the oppression of the post-conquest period.[5] They made ready response to Jasper's rally on behalf of Henry, Earl of Richmond. The ultimate success of their combined efforts at Bosworth in 1485, gave rise to a period of new legislation, which in more senses than one affected the political position of the North Welsh boroughs.

The contemporary bards were loud in their acclamation that the long-expected deliverer had verily come. On Henry Tudor's accession, there was wholesale expectation for Taliessin's promised 'deliverance of exalted power.' The North Welshmen, who played so significant a part in Henry's memorable victory, awaited recognition in the form of the benefits of a long-sought liberty. A celebrated North Welsh bard, Sion Tudyr, in a congratulatory ode to Queen Elizabeth, associates the beginning of the era of Welsh freedom with the accession of Henry VII.

'Harri lân hir lawenydd
Ywr hwn an rhoes ninnau'n *rhydd*
I Gymru da vu hyd vedd
Goroni gwr o Wynedd.' [6]

The annals of Henry's reign are somewhat disappointing to Welsh readers, who look for a drastic repeal of the oppressive

[1] Ramsay, *Lancaster and York*, ii. p. 278.
[2] See *Wales*, p. 296; Parry, *op. cit.*, pp. 267-8; Bradley, *op. cit.*, p. 312; *Hist. of the Gwydir Family* (Sir John Wynne), 1827, p. 63.
[3] See ch. v. above.
[4] *Ib.*, ch. vi. above.
[5] *E.g.* Sir Gruffydd Llwyd and Howel and Tudor ap Gronow.
[6] *Royal Visits and Progresses to Wales* (Parry), p. 293, n. 3.

statutes of Edward I. and subsequent English sovereigns. The benefits of the Tudor regime were rather those of acquisition. The old conditions became effete by reason of the extension of old privileges and the enactment of new laws. Henry VII. accomplished little during his reign beyond roughly indicating the policy that ultimately led to the happy consummation achieved under his illustrious son, Henry VIII.[1]

Towards the close of his reign (1507), Henry VII. issued a remarkable charter to the bondmen and other inhabitants of North Wales.[2] It affected the position of the North Welsh boroughs in several directions. We have already referred to some of these in earlier chapters. The wholesale manumission of the bondmen undermined their old economic setting, and other clauses, as we have seen, led to noteworthy changes in the commercial and judicial status of the English boroughs. We are more specially concerned here with the two political clauses extending to North Welshmen the right of holding offices of charge in Wales, and also the right of acquiring lands in England, and in any English borough or vill in Wales. The English boroughs were thus thrown entirely open to the North Welshmen.

The concession naturally caused deep indignation among the inhabitants of the English boroughs in North Wales. An advanced aspect of the old conflict of the fourteenth century ensued. The particulars of the contest are interesting, in so far as they reveal gradual transition in political sentiment as well as gratifying progress in economic condition. It is somewhat significant that Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris supplied the most prominent resisters.

As we have already stated, these three boroughs, after the revolt of Glyndwr (possibly before), appear to have become estranged from the larger family of English boroughs of the fourteenth century; or rather, may we say that the fifteenth-century family of English boroughs in North Wales consisted of three members, namely, Conway, Carnarvon, and Beaumaris, known as the three English Walled Towns of North Wales. They were most exclusively English throughout, and it was on them that the English Government chiefly relied for political

[1] Cf. *Hist. of Wales* (J. Jones), p. 119.

[2] *Patent Roll*, 22 Henry VII., p. 3, m. 2. For printed text see *Parl. Papers*, 1896, vol. xxv. p. 383; for ditto with translation, *Arch. Camb.*, I. ii. pp. 215-222. *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 10/1 gives an English analysis of its contents.

defence during the later half of the period of settlement.[1] In view of the nature of their services in the past, it occasions no surprise to find the inhabitants of these distinctive boroughs enraged at the opening of their liberties to their old foes, the North Welshmen. In a weak moment the burgesses decided to oppose the inevitable.

In a combined petition to the King, they suggested that the Welshmen of Merioneth should be satisfied with the boroughs of Rhuddlan, Denbigh, Harlech, and Bala, those of Carnarvonshire with Bangor, Pwllheli, Criccieth, and Nevin, and those of Anglesea with Newborough—all and each of which boroughs, they say, are of as great a liberty as any of the three English towns.[2] This outspoken statement affords an admirable illustration of the fact of Welsh progress during the fifteenth century. What the commonalty of English burgesses in Wales offer to two Welshmen in 1444, the commonalty of English burgesses in North Wales are now prepared to extend to Welshmen of three whole counties. This must perhaps be taken as the reluctant acknowledgment of what was more or less an actual fact. Racial qualification for burgess-ship had been practically done away with in the eight boroughs mentioned. The distinct commonalty of English burgesses in North Wales became more and more confined in meaning, in inverse ratio to the increasing significance of the commonalty of North Welshmen. By virtue of Henry's charter, the latter were privileged to enter all the North Welsh boroughs for the first time. But the commonalty of English burgesses in North Wales, now confined to three boroughs, were not going to submit without a struggle.

The English burgesses of Conway, for instance, at once made known to the King what the actual consequences of the great charter had been to them. In their petition of complaint they preface the questionable statement that they had peaceably enjoyed their privileges since the time of Edward I., *until now of late* certain inhabitants within the said town of Conway, and also of the commotes adjacent, by colour and misrepresentation of a Charter of Liberties granted to the Welshery of the county of North Wales, usurped their ancient liberties. The burgesses, too, challenge the authenticity of the charter,

[1] Cf. *Ancient and Modern Denbigh* (J. Williams), pp. 91 n., 107.
[2] *Hist. of Aberconway* (R. Williams), pp. 45-6.

intimating that it was craftily obtained by a certain Spanish ambassador. As yet we have found nothing to substantiate this. That the charter was strictly adhered to in several of its clauses during the Tudor period is certain. The burgesses of Conway also testify to its actual operation. It was on this pretext, they say, that the Welsh entered into the privileges of Conway as largely as any English burgesses had done in the previous centuries, and that, much to the disgust of the old burgesses, and to the general undoing of the three English walled towns in North Wales.[1] Conway's plea was not entirely ignored. Articles of injunction were issued on the 20th of February 1509, hardly a month before Henry VII.'s decease, by the Bishop of Winchester, the Earl of Surrey, Sir Thomas Lovell, and others of the King's council, dealing with the variances between the foreign inhabitants of the three shires of Carnarvon, Merioneth, and Anglesea and the burgesses of the King's English walled towns and garrisons in North Wales. Nominal respite was assured to the burgesses (1) by restoring the North Welshmen to their old position as before the issue of the great charter; (2) by forbidding them the right of inquiry or indictment in matters touching English burgesses; and (3) by withholding from them the right to bear arms in the English walled towns. A proviso was appended, to the effect that an inquiry was to be held immediately for a strict examination of the charters hitherto granted to the English burgesses and to the North Welshmen.[2] This was the state of the conflict when Henry Tudor, from whom the Welsh had expected so much, breathed his last.

Despite the above stipulation, the actual position was apparently unchanged. The North Welshmen evidently made the most of their charter, such as it was. Affrays, misdemeanours, and assaults formed common incidents in the civic administration of the garrison towns during the early years of the reign of Henry VIII. On the 9th of March 1518, the King commissioned the local justice and chamberlain of North Wales, together with the constable of the castle of Carnarvon, to make inquiries into the hardships inflicted by Welshmen on the burgesses of the town of Carnarvon.[3] It transpired that several English bailiffs had recently been murdered there during the execution of their municipal duties, and the borough juries

[1] *Hist. of Aberconway* (R. Williams), pp. 43-4.
[2] *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 9/13. [3] *Ibid.*

were so packed by Welshmen in cases touching the English commonalty, that the ends of justice were almost always defeated. These were the usual points of inquiry during this critical period of perjured inquests and bloody affrays. The local conflict was now civil rather than political. The Wales of the future wanted efficient courts rather than strong castles.

Throughout the reign of Henry VIII., North Wales continued to be the scene of much civil dissatisfaction on the part both of the English burgesses and of the native populace. In the boroughs, from the circumstance of the improved position of the North Welshmen by virtue of Henry VII.'s charter; among the commonalty of North Wales, through the high-handed treatment and arbitrary action of the sheriffs and other of the King's ministers there. About the year 1530 we have simultaneous complaints from the commonalty of the English burgesses in North Wales and from the commonalty of the three shires, illustrating the consequences of the changed conditions to the English boroughs, and also the changing attitude and grievances of the North Welsh people.

The occasion for the presentation of complaints by the inhabitants of the three shires was the promulgation of a general Act of Pardon [1] in 1530, to all subjects of the realm of England, for all manner of felonies under the sum of twenty shillings, and also of divers other offences. The local prisons in North Wales at this time were literally crammed with felonious Welshmen and their sureties, yet the privileges of this Act were not extended to them, because they were specified to 'our subjects of the realm of England.' The North Welsh put forth a claim to the benefits of the Act, on the ground that the three shires formed parcel of the realm of England, and that their ancestors had been accustomed to enjoy the content of such Acts ever since the conquest,[2] and of all until this time, when the royal officers there, for the covetousness of their fees more than for the King's advantage, had been very extreme against them, and would not allow them to enjoy the said pardon. The petitioners go on to impress the King with other obvious disadvantages to which they were subject and liable, through not enjoying the privileges of the realm. They lost not only the benefit of pardons, but also the Probate of Testaments,

[1] Stat. 21 Henry VIII., c. 1.
[2] This statement suggests an interesting field for historical inquiry.

in addition to the uncertainty after what law or order they should hereafter live, as they were now ordered according to the officer's pleasure to their great unquietness. They accordingly begged the King to grant them the laws of England as was their wont before; also the full effect of the last pardon as well for the redeeming of seven hundred of their countrymen that remained in prison, as for the relief of those that were fleeing out of the country. As an alternative, in case of refusal, they begged that an inquest should be taken touching the premises.[1]

This petition affords valuable insight into some of the salient defects of the administrative system of Mediæval Wales. It also possesses the additional interest of illustrating a pleasing change in the political attitude of the North Welshmen, during the period of settlement. In the Kennington petitions at the outset of our period, we found them clamouring for a strict observance of the Old Welsh Laws. Here, after a lapse of more than two centuries, they are unanimous in their assent to the introduction of the laws of England, under which they had been governed at the discretion and pleasure of royal officers since the conquest. In the preamble to the Act of Union [2] the King states that some rude and ignorant people had made distinction and diversity between the King's subjects of the realm, and his subjects of the Dominion and Principality of Wales (referring probably in part to the indiscretion of royal officials deputed to Wales), whereby great discord, variance, debates, division, murder, and sedition hath grown up between the said subjects. To assure future concord and unity, Parliament, in 1536, sanctioned the Act of Union incorporating Wales with the realm of England. Among other things it stipulated that all persons born in Wales should enjoy all liberties as other subjects of England did, a strange contrast to the racial enactments of previous sovereigns.

The burgesses of Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris formulated their grievances in a petition presented to Cardinal Wolsey in 1529.[3] The North Welsh, in virtue of Henry VII.'s charter, made considerable encroachment upon liberties which, up to now, had been their precious monopoly. Trial by comburgesses was being continually overruled to their great cost and damage. The amercements of Welshmen in their civil courts were greatly

[1] *Exchqr. Miscellanea* 9/30.
[2] Cf. *Letters and Papers Henry VIII.*, vol. v., No. 682.
[3] *Arch. Camb.*, IV. xiii. pp. 309-10.

reduced, and mixed juries added to their further peril. Welshmen gradually crept into offices of charge and places of municipal importance; they also settled in the boroughs in larger numbers, and carried arms contrary to the tenor of the old statutes. The burgesses also reflect upon the irregular actions of the local sheriffs, who were not altogether successful in bringing Welsh felons to book; and make a final and albeit a reasonable plea that something should be done to secure the good bearing of all 'foreigners' (*i.e.* native Welshmen), as of late they murdered bailiffs and other English burgesses. The burgesses in this petition practically seek a more adequate system of justice rather than a revival of the old penal statutes as heretofore.

The Act of Union in 1536, dealt impartially with the grievances of both North Welshman and English burgess as represented in the petitions of 1529-30. Other things equal, they were placed on a common footing in relation to the privileges of the realm. The readiness of the Welsh to accept English law, and the desire of the English burgesses that the Welsh should be of good bearing and nothing more, were sure tokens that the close of the period of political settlement was at hand. In the eyes of the Crown it was sufficient to warrant the permanent union of Wales and England. In this way closed the political history of Mediæval Wales, and its mediæval boroughs.

During the Tudor period the Welsh boroughs, like Wales itself, were being gradually transferred from a mediæval to a modern setting. From Mediæval Wales, the country of war,[1] we pass to the law-abiding Wales of the modern age. This transition is instanced in the story of the Welsh boroughs, by the fact that at this time the majority practically cease to be garrison towns. Fortified boroughs of the *ville anglaise* type were more or less doomed in Wales with the invention of gunpowder, and the subsequent revolutions in the art of war. Castles and town walls, no longer impregnable, lost their ancient importance. This was of no small moment to several of the mediæval boroughs of the Principality.

With the decay of the castle during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, many of the Welsh boroughs fall to a second-rate importance. The castellated boroughs witnessed their golden age during the feudal era. In Wales, they owed their paramount importance to their position as military bul-

[1] Cf. *Y Cymmrodor.*, vol. xiii. p. 147.

warks of the English Crown, or as the vantage ground for the pleasure and profit of the Marcher lord. They flourished in an economy that depended chiefly on the relation of persons, which in Wales, was somewhat embittered by the consideration of race. They formed an integral part of the feudal and semi-military shell within which Welsh society thrived during the later Middle Ages.

One aspect of the decay of this feudal society, or better, one feature of the progress of Welsh civilisation during the early Tudor period, is the gradual divorce of the towns from the control of the castles.[1] Welsh boroughs, generally, begin to show the symptoms of a new independence at this time, as the result of their transition from the dependent atmosphere of mediæval society to the comparatively independent and more enterprising environment of the modern age. The boroughs lose their old feudality. The private will of the town community comes into prominence, the towns rely more and more upon their own resources, and act in a spirit more in unison with our notion of a modern municipal corporation. We have already enumerated the particular evidences of these general political changes in the status of the North Welsh boroughs.

One other result of the gradual elimination of the mediævalism of our Welsh boroughs was the extension to them of the rights of Parliamentary representation. The Welsh municipalities were brought into line with the rest of the boroughs of the realm, and began to enjoy the privileges of fully-fledged boroughs for the first time. This change was not altogether a welcome one. Three of the North Welsh boroughs had on one occasion appointed representatives before,[2] but their Parliamentary history as such dates from the Act of Union.[3] A new importance and a changed character are given to their political history from this date; it is no longer a struggle of arms, as during the Middle Ages, but a conflict of votes more in conformity with modern disputes. Their political history in the future becomes involved with the influence and intrigue of powerful town families, whose origins we have incidentally touched upon in the preceding chapters.

Further, the Welsh boroughs, during the Tudor period, were introduced into a new economic setting, in the sense that

[1] Cf. *Hist. of Lit. in Wales* (C. Wilkins), p. 139.
[2] See above, p. 236.
[3] Stat. 27 Henry VIII., c. 29.

commerce rather than war was to be the chief determinant of their future greatness and usefulness. Up to this time it had been a question of politics rather than economics, a question of the relation of persons rather than the exchange of things. Henry VIII. was fully alive to the importance of this change to the Welsh boroughs. In 1542[1] he reserved to himself the right for seven years of annulling the little corporate towns of Wales, that were reduced to mediocre rank through the loss of their political prestige as units of royal and baronial government in Wales. Several of the political towns of the Middle Ages were ill at ease in the changing environment of Welsh society during the Tudor age. Only those that were suitably adapted to the conditions of modern economy continued to flourish with any municipal elaborateness. Beaumaris, Carnarvon, and Conway are perhaps the only North Welsh boroughs that profited from the commercial impulse of the Tudor and later periods, up to the days of the municipal reform. The remaining North Welsh boroughs sink (and indeed had been sinking since the middle of the fifteenth century) to the rank of unimportant market towns with a glorious past, exercising their old corporate privileges in languid fashion. Their purely municipal history, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is mainly connected with Parliamentary elections, but strong corporate recollections were revived when threats were made to interfere with their landed status.

The North Welsh boroughs contain no monumental remains predicating the existence of great civic wealth during the Middle Ages. There are no elaborate churches, no expensive insignia; only the old castles and town walls. As we have seen, there were no great centres of industry, art, and learning, though Carnarvon must have exercised some considerable influence in the latter respect. On the whole, the mediæval towns of Wales, as industrial and commercial centres, were relatively of less importance than even those of Mediæval England. The land of Snowdon, in the immediate vicinity of the North Welsh boroughs, was eminently a pastoral one. The more important of the maritime boroughs, however, gradually lose their old manorial character from the Tudor period onwards. The dissolution of the Welsh monasteries gave great impetus to the economic revolution that was taking place in the agrarian

[1] Stat. 34-5 Henry VIII., c. 27.

and commercial conditions of the mediæval borough. Throughout the fifteenth century, the more important boroughs showed signs of development on the lines of a national rather than a natural economy. A sense of commercial enterprise was gradually developed by the burgesses of Beaumaris, Conway, and Carnarvon, at the expense of the older conditions of a self-sufficing economy. During the Tudor period, from being handicapped by the impediments of political and feudal control, these same boroughs among others of the realm, were ushered into a mercantile atmosphere where men of the character of a Drake and a Raleigh flourished. Burghal life in all its aspects became more a matter of wealth and less a matter of tenure. In the days of municipal reform, the boroughs of Newborough, Nevin, Pwllheli, Criccieth, Harlech, and Bala exhibit the influence of this change in much smaller proportions than the boroughs of Beaumaris, Conway, and Carnarvon.

With these general remarks on the changing character of Welsh municipal history during the early Tudor period, and on the later story of the North Welsh boroughs, we bring to a close our study of the growth and development of the municipal element in the three shires of North Wales during the period of settlement.

To the keen nationalist of Modern Wales the story, at first sight, reveals a negative interest. Why should he trouble himself with the story of boroughs in which his ancestors had no legal right of residence? Why should he turn over pages showing the activity of burgesses who actually dared to hamper his forefathers with offensive tolls? Of much greater interest to him is the story of the little contemporary Welsh towns of Machynlleth, Aberdaron, and Dolgelly, where plans were carefully prepared for the overthrow of these symbols of the English yoke. The racial associations of the minor mediæval towns of North Wales must not blind our eyes to the deeper significance of the English boroughs. The story of the North Welsh boroughs is something more than the story of a conflict between English and Welsh; it is also the story of Welsh progress. Every Welshman should read the story of boroughs that gave to his ancestors a higher instinct of civic liberty, and gradually developed in them a sense of patriotic duty in spheres other than the battlefield. North Welsh liberty, as depicted in the great charter of Henry Tudor, found its oasis in the *liber burgus* of the late

thirteenth century. The free boroughs, too, were the pioneers of an advancing civilisation. They fostered commerce, and instilled into the rural hamlets that surrounded them, both higher possibilities and also more refined methods of life. The small Welsh ports of Barmouth and Aberdovey have national associations of the best during this period, but it is in the story of the borough ports of Carnarvon, Conway, and Beaumaris that we have the origin and development of the economic and commercial interchange, which educated the Welsh nation in the ways and means of an enlightened civilisation.

We may sum up the general contribution of the North Welsh boroughs to the cause of Welsh progress during the Middle Ages, by saying that they were the apostles of a new liberty and the avenues of economic development.

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[1] A complete translation of the texts of these rolls has been compiled, but this, together with lists of the constables, bailiffs, and other officers of the several castles and boroughs (1284-1536), owing to consideration of space, have been omitted from the present Appendices.

A. TEXTS OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS

I. CHARTERS AND LETTERS PATENT

(a) *Original Charters of the North Welsh Boroughs.*

WELSH ROLL 12 EDWARD I., No. 5, m. 2.

Burgensibus de Aberconwey de libertatibus suis.

ET eisdem[1] salutem. Sciatis quod volumus et concedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod villa nostra de Aberconewey de cetero liber burgus sit et homines nostri eiusdem villæ liberi sint burgenses et quod constabularius castri nostri de Aberconewey qui pro tempore fuerit sit maior burgi illius iuratus tam nobis quam eisdem burgensibus qui prius præstito sacramento de iuribus nostris conservandis eisdem burgensibus iuret super sancta dei ewangelia quod ipse libertates eisdem burgensibus a nobis concessas conservabit et faciet fideliter ea quæ ad officium maioriæ pertinet in eodem burgo. Concedimus eciam quod ipsi burgenses singulis annis in festo sancti Michælis duos ballivos idoneos et sufficientes de semetipsis eligant et dicto constabulario tanquam maiori suo præsentent qui in præsencia dictorum maioris et burgensium iurent quod officium ballivæ suæ fideliter facient et exequentur. Volumus eciam et concedimus quod dicti burgenses habeant liberam prisonam suam in burgo prædicto de omnibus transgressoribus ibidem exceptis casibus vitæ et membrorum in quibus casibus omnes tam burgenses quam alii imprisonentur in castro nostro ibidem verumptamen si aliqui dictorum burgensium rectati accusati vel indictati fuerint super aliqua transgressione in huiusmodi casibus volumus quod ea occasione imprisonentur quamdiu bonam et sufficientem manucapcionem invenerint ad standum inde recto coram capitali justiciario nostro vel aliis justiciariis nostris ad hoc deputatis. **Conway, 1284.**

Concedimus insuper eisdem burgensibus quod omnes terræ eidem burgo iam assignatæ dewarrennatæ et deafforestatæ sint omnino et quod Judæi in eodem burgo aliquibus temporibus non morentur.

Concedimus eciam pro nobis et heredibus nostris eisdem burgensibus libertates subscriptas videlicet quod nullus vicecomitum nostrorum in aliquo se intromittat super eos de aliquo placito vel querela vel occasione vel aliqua re alia ad prædictam villam pertinente salvis tamen nobis et heredibus nostris placitis coronæ nostræ sicut prædictum est et quod ipsi habeant gildam mercatoriam cum hansa et aliis consuetudinibus et liberta-

[1] Rex Archiepiscopis *et cetera* salutem (as recited in the superscription of the charter of Flint, which precedes that of Conway on the same membrane).

tibus ad gildam illam pertinentibus ita quod nullus qui non sit de gilda illa mercandisam aliquam faciat in eadem villa nisi de voluntate burgensium prædictorum.

Concedimus eciam eisdem quod si aliquis nativus alicuius in præfata villa manserit et terram in ea tenuerit et fuerit in præfata gilda et hansa et loth et shot cum eisdem hominibus nostris per unum annum et unum diem sine calumpnia deinceps non possit repeti a domino suo set in eadem villa liber permaneat.

Præterea concedimus eisdem burgensibus nostris quod habeant sok et sak thol et theam et infangenetheof et quod quieti sint per totam terram nostram de theolonio, lestagio, passagio, muragio, pontagio et stallagio et de leue danegeld et gaywyte et omnibus aliis consuetudinibus et exactionibus per totam potestatem nostram tam in Anglia quam in omnibus aliis terris nostris et quod ipsi vel eorum bona ubicunque locorum in terra vel potestate nostra inventa non arestentur pro aliquo debito de quo fideiussores aut principales debitores non extiterint, nisi forte ipsi debitores de eorum sint communa et potestate habentes unde de debitis suis in toto vel in parte satisfacere possint, et dicti burgenses nostri creditoribus eorundem debitorum in justicia defuerint et de hoc racionabiliter constare possit. Et quod iidem burgenses nostri pro transgressione seu forisfactura servient suorum catalla et bona sua in manibus ipsorum inventa aut alicubi locorum per ipsos servientes deposita quatenus sua esse sufficienter probare poterint non amittant, et eciam quod si iidem burgenses aut eorum aliqui infra terram aut potestatem nostram testati decesserint vel intestati nos vel heredes nostri bona ipsorum confiscari non faciemus quin eorum heredes ea integre habeant quatenus dicta catalla dictorum defunctorum fuisse constiterint dumtamen de dictis heredibus notitia aut fides sufficienter habeatur. Et quod burgenses nostri prædicti non convincantur per aliquos forinsecos super aliquibus appellationibus rectis iniuriis transgressionibus criminibus calumpniis demandis eis impositis aut imponendis a Kaernarvan usque ad aquam de Cloyt set solummodo per burgenses nostros prædictos nisi de aliqua re tangente communitatem burgi prædicti et tunc in casu illo deducantur secundum libertates approbatas et hactenus racionabiliter usitatas in civitate nostra Herefordiæ.

Quare volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod villa nostra de Aberconewey decetero liber burgus sit et homines nostri eiusdem villæ liberi sint burgenses. Et quod constabularius castri nostri de Aberconewey pro tempore fuerit sit maior burgi illius iuratus tam nobis quam eisdem burgensibus qui prius præstito sacramento de iuribus nostris conservandis eisdem burgensibus iuret super sancti dei Ewangelia quod ipse libertates eisdem burgensibus a nobis concessas conservabit et fideliter faciet ea que ad officium maioriæ pertinent in eodem burgo.

Concedimus eciam quod ipsi burgenses singulis annis in festo sancti Michaelis duos ballivos idoneos et sufficientes de semetipsis eligant et dicto constabulario tanquam maiori suo præsentent qui in præsencia dictorum maioris et burgensium iurent quod officium ballivæ suæ fideliter facient et exequentur.

Volumus eciam et concedimus quod dicti burgenses habeant liberam prisonam suam in burgo prædicto de omnibus transgressionibus ibidem exceptis casibus vitæ et membrorum in quibus casibus omnes tam burgenses quam alii imprisonentur in castro nostro ibidem verumptamen si aliqui dictorum burgensium rectati accusati vel iudictati fuerint super aliqua transgessione in huiusmodi casibus volumus quod ea occasione imprisonentur quamdiu bonam et sufficientem manucapcionem invenerint ad standum inde recto coram capitali justiciario nostro vel aliis justiciariis nostris ad hoc deputatis.

Concedimus insuper eisdem burgensibus quod omnes terræ eidem burgo iam assignatæ dewarrenatæ et deafforestatæ sint omnino et quod Judæi in eodem burgo aliquibus temporibus non morentur.

Volumus eciam et concedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod prædicti burgenses habeant omnes alias libertates et liberas consuetudines superius expressas bene et pacifice absque occasione vel impedimento nostri vel heredum nostrorum justiciariorum vicecomitum et aliorum ballivorum seu ministrorum quorumcumque imperpetuum sicut prædictum est. Testibus ut supra.[1]

Welsh Roll, 12 Edward I., No. 5, m. 3.

Burgensibus de Karnarvan de libertatibus suis.

Carnarvon, 1284.

Rex archiepiscopis etc. Sciatis quod volumus et concedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod villa nostra de Karnarvan de cetero liber burgus sit—*etc. etc.* as Conway above *mutatis mutandis*. . . .—Et quod burgenses nostri prædicti non convincantur per aliquos forinsecos super aliquibus appellis—*etc. etc.* . . . impositis aut imponendis infra comitatum de Karnarvan et ripam de Devy videlicet ab aqua de Aberconewey usque aquam de Devy set solummodo per burgenses nostros prædictos nisi—*etc. etc.* . . in civitate nostra Herefordiæ. Quare, *etc. etc.* . . . Testibus ut supra.[2] Datum ut supra.[2]

Welsh Roll, 13 Edward I., No. 6, m. 4.

Pro burgensibus de Crukÿth de libertatibus eis concessis.

Criccieth, 1285.

Rex Archiepiscopis etc. salutem. Sciatis quod volumus et concedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod villa nostra de Crukÿth de cetero liber burgus sit—*etc. etc.* as Conway above *mutatis mutandis*. . . .—Et quod burgenses nostri prædicti non convincantur per aliquos forinsecos super aliquibus appellis—*etc. etc.* . . . impositis aut imponendis a rypa de Kaernarvan quæ vocatur Seyntes usque ad rypam de Devÿ set solummodo per burgenses nostros prædictos nisi—*etc. etc.*—in civitate nostra Herefordiæ. Quare etc. ut supra.[3] Hiis testibus ut supra.[3] Datum ut supra.[3]

[1] The attestation clause of Flint runs thus:—Hiis testibus venerabili patre Roberto Bathoniensi et Wellensi episcopo cancellario nostro, Thoma de Clare, Ricardo de Burgo comite Ultoniæ, Ricardo de Brus, Reginaldo de Grey, Nicholao de Segrave, Petro de Chaumpnent, Johanne de Monte Alto et aliis. Datum per manum nostram apud Flynt octavo die Septembris.

[2] *I.e.* as Conway.

[3] *I.e.* as Harlech.

WELSH ROLL, 13 EDWARD I., No. 6, m. 4.

Pro burgensibus Hardelagh de libertatibus eis concessis.

Harlech, 1285. Rex archiepiscopis etc. salutem. Sciatis quod volumus et concedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod villa nostra de Hardelagh de cetero liber burgus sit—*etc. etc.* as Conway above *mutatis mutandis*. . . .—Et quod burgenses nostri prædicti non convincantur per aliquos forinsecos super aliquibus appellis—*etc. etc.* impositis aut imponendis a ripa de Karnarvan quæ vocatur Seyntes usque ad ripam de Devy set solumodo[1] per burgenses nostros prædictos nisi—*etc. etc.* in civitate nostra Herefordiæ. Quare volumus[2] etc. ut supra. Testibus ut supra.[3] Datum ut supra.[3]

WELSH ROLL, 13 EDWARD I., No. 6, m. 4.

Pro burgensibus de Bere de libertatibus eis concessis.

Bere, 1285. Rex archiepiscopis etc. salutem. Sciatis quod volumus et concedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod villa nostra de Bere de cetero liber burgus sit—*etc. etc.* as Conway above *mutatis mutandis*. . . . Et quod burgenses nostri prædicti non convincantur per aliquos forinsecos super aliquibus appellis—*etc. etc.* . . . impositis aut imponendis a ripa de Abermau usque ad ripam de Devy set solummodo per burgenses nostros prædictos nisi—*etc. etc.*—in civitate nostra Herefordiæ. Quare, etc. Hiis testibus, venerabili patre Roberto Bathoniensi et Wellensi episcopo, cancellario nostro; Willelmo de Valencia avunculo nostro; Ricardo de Burgo, comite Ultoniæ; Johanne de Vescy, Ottone de Grandisono, Roberto Tibotot, Ricardo de Brus, Roberto filio Johannis, Johanne de Monte Alto, et aliis. Datum per manum nostram apud Kardigan xxij die Novembris.

CHARTER ROLL, 24 EDWARD I., mm. 1-2.

Pro burgensibus villæ de Bello Marisco.

Beaumaris, 1295. Rex archiepiscopis etc. salutem. Sciatis quod volumus et concedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod villa nostra de Bello Marisci de cetero liber burgus sit—*&c. &c.*—as Conway above *mutatis mutandis*. . . . Et quod burgenses nostri prædicti non convincantur per aliquos forinsecos super aliquibus appellis—*&c. &c.* . . . impositis aut imponendis infra comitatum de Angleseye set solummodo per burgenses nostros prædictos nisi—*&c. &c.* in civitate nostra Herefordiæ. Quare, etc. Hiis testibus venerabili patre Antonio Dunolmensi episcopo, Johanne de Warrenna comite Surr[eiæ], Hugone de Despenser, Johanne de Hasting[es], Waltero de Bello Campo, senescallo hospicii nostri, Petro de Chaumpnent, Johanne de Merk, Petro de Tadington, et aliis. Datum per manum nostram apud Berwyk super Twedam quinto decimo die Septembris.

[1] *Sic* in MS. [2] The *quare* clause is not recited in the MS. [3] *I.e.* as Bere.

PATENT ROLL, 17 EDWARD II., p. 2, m. 19.

Pro hominibus villæ Regis de Neuburgh in Anglesia.

Rex omnibus ad quos etc. salutem. Inspeximus cartam quam nos antequam regni nostri gubernacula suscepimus dum eramus princeps Walliæ hominibus villæ de Neuburgh in Angleseia fecimus in hæc verba. Edwardus illustris Regis Angliæ filius Princeps Walliæ comes Cestriæ Pontiui et Montis Trolii universis ad quos præsentes litteræ pervenerint salutem. Sciatis nos concessisse et hac carta nostra confirmasse hominibus villæ nostræ de Neuburgh' in Anglesia quod villa illa decetero liber burgus sit et quod homines eundem burgum inhabitantes liberi sint burgenses et quod habeant gildam mercatoriam cum hansa et cum omnibus libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus ad liberum burgum pertinentibus quales videlicet habent liberi burgenses nostri de Rothelan in burgo suo. Quare volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod villa prædicta liber burgus sit et quod homines eundem burgum inhabitantes liberi sunt burgenses et quod habeant gildam mercatoriam cum hansa et cum omnibus libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus ad liberum burgum pertinentibus quales videlicet habent liberi burgenses nostri de Rothelan in burgo suo sicut prædictum est. Hiis testibus venerabili patre suo Antonio Dunolmensi episcopo, dominiis, Johanne de Brytannia consanguineo nostro, Roberto de Clifford, Petro de Malo Lacu, Johanne de Haverying, Rogero Brabazon, Willelmo Inge, et aliis. Datum per manum nostram apud Dunolmiam tercio die Maii anno regni domini Regis patris nostri tricesimo primo. Nos autem concessionem et confirmacionem prædictas ratas habentes et gratas eas pro nobis et heredibus nostris burgensibus dicti burgi de Neuburgh et eorum heredibus et successoribus concedimus et confirmamus sicut carta prædicta rationabiliter testatur. In cuius etc. Teste Rege apud Ffulmere vicesimo septimo die Aprilis.

per ipsum Regem.

Newborough 1303.

PATENT ROLL, 2 RICHARD II., p. 2, m. 7.

De confirmacione pro burgensibus de Bala.

Rex omnibus ad quos etc. salutem. Inspeximus cartam domini Edwardi nuper Regis Angliæ proavi nostri in hæc verba. Edwardus dei gratia Rex Angliæ dominus Hiberniæ et dux Aquitanniæ archiepiscopis episcopis abbatibus prioribus comitibus baronibus justiciariis vicecomitibus præpositis ministris et omnibus ballivis et fidelibus suis salutem. Sciatis quod cum dudum dato nobis intelligi quod in quodam loco vocato Penthlyn in Northwallia congregaciones et conventicula malefactorum et prædonum fieri consueverant et hominibus per locum illum transeuntibus facinora ac alia dampna innumera fuerant irrogata villam de Bala in loco prædicto per tunc Justiciarium nostrum Walliæ pro securitate parcium illarum et ad

Bala, 1324.

maliciam malefactorum et prædonum huius[modi] in partibus illis refrenandam ordinassemus, et quod villa prædicta esset liber burgus et quod omnes et singuli dictam villam inhabitantes et imposterum inhabitaturi et eorum heredes et successores liberi burgenses nostri essent, et quibusdam libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus uterentur in eodem burgo, ac iam per inquisicionem per dilectum et fidelem nostrum Edmundum comitem Arundelli Justiciarium nostrum Walliæ de mandato nostro factam, et in cancellaria nostra retornatam, sit compertum quod villa prædicta ordinata fuit pro commodo nostro et pro securitate parcium illarum et ad maliciam malefactorum et prædonum in eisdem partibus refrenandam, et quod non est ad dampnum seu præjudicium nostrum aut aliorum si concedamus per cartam nostram hominibus et tenentibus nostris Anglicis in eadem villa de Bala habitantibus quod villa illa liber burgus nostri et heredum nostrorum sit imperpetuum et quod ipsi homines et tenentes imperpetuum habeant unum marcatum[3] singulis septimanis per diem sabbati apud villam prædictam et duas fiberias iidem singulis annis per sex dies duraturas videlicet unam in vigilia in die et in crastino apostolorum Petri et Pauli et aliam in vigilia in die et in crastino Invencionis Sanctæ Crucis[1] cum libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus ad huius[modi] mercatum et feriam pertinentibus, et quod habeant omnes alias libertates et liberas consuetudines hominibus nostris de Kaernarvan per cartam domini Edwardi quondam Regis Angliæ patris nostri concessas. Nos volentes hominibus et burgensibus nostris Anglicis prædictæ villæ nostræ de Bala gratiam in hac parte facere specialem, concessimus eis et hac carta nostra confirmavimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod dicta villa nostra de Bala de cetero liber burgus sit et quod homines et[2] burgenses nostri Anglici eiusdem villæ in eadem habitantes et imposterum habitaturi et eorum heredes et successores sint liberi burgenses nostri, et quod ipsi burgum illum fossato et muro de petra et calce includere possint, et quod singulis annis in festo sancti Michaelis de semetipsis elegant unum maiorem qui statim cum electus fuerit prius juret nobis ad sancta Dei Evangelia de iuribus nostris conservandis et postea eisdem burgensibus quod ipse libertates eis a nobis concessas conservabit et faciet fideliter ea quæ ad officium maioriæ pertinent in eodem burgo, et similiter duos ballivos idoneos et sufficientes qui in præsencia Maioris et burgensium prædictorum iurent ad sancta Dei Evangelia quod officium ballivæ suæ fideliter facient et exequentur, et quod dicti homines et burgenses et eorum heredes et successores imperpetuum habeant unam[3] mercatum singulis septimanis per diem sabbati apud villam praedictam et duas ferias ibidem singulis annis per sex dies duraturas videlicet unam in vigilia in die et in crastino Apostolorum Petri et Pauli et aliam in vigilia in die et in crastino Invencionis Sanctæ Crucis nisi mercatum illud et feriæ illæ sint ad nocumentum vicinorum mercatorum et vicinarum feriarum, et quod habeant liberam prisonam suam in burgo prædicto de omnibus transgressoribus ibidem exceptis casibus vitæ et membrorum in quibus casibus omnes tam burgenses

[1] Interlined in MS. [2] Interlined in MS.
[3] *Sic* in MS.

quam alii in prisona nostra de Hardelagh imprisonentur, verumptamen si aliqui burgensium prædictorum rectati accusati seu indicati fuerint super aliqua transgressione vitam vel membrum non tangente nolumus quod ea occasione imprisonentur quamdiu bonam et sufficientem manucapcionem invenerint ad standum inde recto coram capitali Justiciario vel aliis iusticiariis nostris ad hoc deputatis, et quod omnes terræ eidem burgo iam assignatæ extra warennam et forestam nostram sint omnino, et quod ipsi et eorum heredes et successores imperpetuum habeant libertates subscriptas, videlicet, quod nullus vicecomites seu alius ballivus noster in aliquo se intromittat super eos de aliquo placito querela vel occasione seu de aliqua alia re ad prædictam villam pertinente salvis tamen nobis et heredibus nostris et justiciariis nostris Walliæ placitis coronæ nostræ ibidem, et quod ipsi habeant gildam mercatoriam cum hansa et aliis consuetudinibus et libertatibus ad gildam prædictam pertinentibus, ita quod nullus qui non sit de gilda illa moretur in eadem villa ad mercandisandum ibidem nisi de voluntate burgensium prædictorum, et quod si aliquis nativus alicuius in præfato burgo manserit et terram vel tenementum in eodem tenuerit et fuerit in præfata gilda et hansa et lot et scot cum eisdem hominibus nostris per unum annum et unum diem sine calumpnia deinceps non possit repeti a domino suo set in eodem burgo liber permaneat, et quod dicti homines et bugenses nostri et eorum heredes et successores habeant sok et sak Tol et Theam et Infangenethef, et quod quieti sint per totam terram nostram de theolonio lestagio passagio muragio pontagio pavagio stallagio et de leue Danegeld et gaywite et omnibus aliis consuetudinibus et exactionibus per totam potestatem nostram tam in Anglia quam in omnibus aliis terris nostris, et quod ipsi vel eorum bona quocumque locorum in terra vel potestate nostra inventa non arestentur pro aliquo debito de quo fideiussores aut principales delitores non extiterint nisi forte ipsi debitores de eorum sint communa et potestate habentes unde de debitis suis in toto vel in parte satisfacere possint et dicti burgenses nostri creditoribus eorundem debitorum in iusticia defuerint et de hoc rationabiliter constare possint, et quod iidem burgenses nostri pro transgressione seu pro forisfactura servientum suorum catalla et bona sua in manibus ipsorum inventa aut alicubi locorum per ipsos servientes deposita quatenus sua esse sufficientes probare poterint non amittant, et eciam quod si iidem burgenses aut eorum aliqui infra terram et potestatem nostram testati decesserunt vel intestati nos vel heredes nostri[1] bona ipsorum confiscari non faciemus quin eorum heredes ea integre habeant quatenus dicta catalla dictorum defunctorum fuisse constiterit dum tamen de dictis heredibus noticia aut fides sufficienter habeatur, et quod burgenses nostri prædicti non convincantur per aliquos forinsecos super aliquibus appellis rectis iniuriis transgressionibus criminibus calumpniis demandis eis impositis aut imponendis infra comitatum de Meryonyth set solummodo per burgenses nostros prædictos nisi de aliqua se tangente comunitatatem burgi prædicti et tunc in casu illo deducantur secundum libertates approbatas et hactenus rationabiliter usitatas in dicto burgo nostro de Kaernarvan imperpetuum. Quare

[1] Nr̃is in MS.

volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod prædicta villa nostra de Bala decetero liber burgus sit et quod homines et burgenses nostri Anglici eiusdem villæ in eadem habitantes et imposterum habituri et eorum heredes et successores sint liberi burgenses nostri. Et quod ipsi burgum illum fossato et muro de petra et calce includere possint et quod singulis annis in festo sancti Michaelis de semetipsis eligant unum maiorem qui statim cum electus fuerit prius iuret nobis ad sancta Dei Evangelia de iuribus nostris conservandis et postea eisdem burgensibus quod ipse libertates eis a nobis concessas conservabit et faciet fideliter ea quæ ad officium maioriæ pertinent in eodem burgo et similiter duos ballivos idoneos et sufficientes qui in præsencia maioris et burgensium prædictorum iurent ad sancta Dei Evangelia quod officium ballivæ suæ fideliter facient et exequentur et quod dicti homines et burgenses et eorum heredes et successores imperpetuum habeant unum mercatum singulis septimanis per diem Sabati apud villam prædictam et duas ferias ibidem singulis annis per sex dies duraturas videlicet unam in vigilia in die et in crastino apostolorum Petri et Pauli et aliam in vigilia in die et in crastino Invencionis Sanctæ Crucis nisi mercatum illud et feriæ illæ sint ad nocumentum vicinorum mercatorum et vicinarum feriarum. Et quod habeant liberam prisonam suam in Burgo prædicto de omnibus transgressoribus ibidem exceptis casibus vitæ et membrorum in quibus casibus omnes tam burgenses quam alii in prisona nostra de Hardelagh imprisonentur, verumptamen si aliqui dictorum burgensium rectati accusati vel iudicati fuerint super aliqua transgressione vitam vel membrum non tangente ea occasione non imprisonentur quamdiu bonam et sufficientem manucapcionem invenerint ad standum inde recto coram capitali justiciario nostro vel aliis justiciariis nostris ad hoc deputatis, et quod omnes terræ eidem burgo iam assignatæ extra warrennam et forestam sint omnino, et quod ipsi et eorum heredes et successores imperpetuum habeant libertates subscriptas, videlicet, quod nullus vicecomes seu alius ballivus noster in aliquo se intromittat super eos de aliquo placito querela vel occasione seu de aliqua alia re ad prædictam villam pertinente salvis tamen nobis et heredibus nostris et Justiciariis nostris Walliæ placitis coronæ nostræ ibidem, et quod ipsi habeant gildam mercatoriam cum hansa et aliis consuetudinibus et libertatibus ad gildam prædictam pertinentibus, ita quod nullus qui non sit de gilda illa moretur in eadem villa ad mercandissandum ibidem nisi de voluntate burgensium prædictorum, et quod si aliquis nativus alicuius in præfato burgo manserit et terram vel tenementum in eodem tenuerit et fuerit in præfata gilda et hansa et lot et Scot cum eisdem hominibus nostris per unum annum et unum diem sine calumpnia deinceps non possit repeti a domino suo set in eodem burgo liber permaneat, et quod dicti homines et burgenses nostri et eorum heredes et successores habeant sok et sak tol et theam et Infangenethef et quod quieti sint per totam terram nostram de theolonio lestagio passagio muragio pontagio pavagio stallagio et de leue Danegeld et Gaywite et omnibus aliis consuetudinibus et exactionibus per totam potestatem nostram tam in Anglia quam in omnibus aliis terris nostris. Et quod ipsi vel eorum bona

quocumque locorum in terra vel potestate nostra inventa non arestentur pro aliquo debito de quo fideiussores aut principales debitores non extiterint nisi forte ipsi debitores de eorum sint communa et potestate habentes unde de debitis suis in toto vel in parte satisfacere possint, et dicti burgenses nostri creditoribus eorumdem debitorum in iusticia defuerint et de hoc rationabiliter constare possit, et quod iidem burgenses nostri pro transgressione seu forisfactura servientum suorum catalla et bona sua in manibus ipsorum inventa aut alicubi locorum per ipsos servientes deposita quatenus sua esse sufficienter probare poterint non amittant. Et eciam quod si[1] iidem burgenses aut eorum aliqui infra terram vel potestatem nostram testati decesserint vel intestati nos vel heredes nostri bona ipsorum confiscari non faciemus quin eorum heredes ea integre habeant quatenus dicta catalla dictorum defunctorum fuisse constiterit dumtamen de dictis heredibus noticia aut fides sufficienter habeatur. Et quod burgenses nostri prædicti non convincantur per aliquos forinsecos super aliquibus appellis rectis iniuriis transgressionibus criminibus calumpniis demandis eis impositis aut imponendis infra comitatum de Merionyth set solummodo per burgenses nostros prædictos nisi de aliqua re tangente communitatem burgi prædicti et tunc in casu illo deducantur secundum libertates approbatas et hactenus rationabiliter usitatas in dicto burgo nostro de Kaernarvan imperpetuum sicut prædictum est. Hiis testibus venerabilibus patribus Walteri archiepiscopo Cantuarensi tocius Angliæ primate ; Walteri Exoniensi thesaurario nostro et Johanne Norwycensi, episcopis ; Adomaro de Valencia comite Pembrochiæ. Edmundo comite Arundelli, Hugo[ne] le Despenser comite Wyntoniæ, Hugone de Courtenay, Roberto de Monte Alto, Ricardo Damory senescallo hospicii nostri, et aliis. Datum per manum nostram apud Westmonasterium primo die Junii anno regni nostri decimo septimo. Nos autem donacionem et concessionem prædictam ratas habentes et gratas eas pro nobis et heredibus nostris quantum in nobis est nunc burgensibus burgi prædicti et eorum heredibus et successoribus burgensibus eiusdem burgi concedimus et confirmamus sicut carta prædicta rationabiliter testatur et prout eidem burgenses et homines burgi illius et eorum antecessores libertatibus et immunitatibus prædictis a tempore confectionis cartæ prædictæ semper hactenus rationabiliter usi sunt et gavisi in cuius etc. Teste Rege apud Westmonasterium tercio die Junii.

pro quinque marcis solutis in hanaperio.

PATENT ROLL, 6 RICHARD II., p. 3, m. 14.

De confirmacione pro hominibus de Nevyn.

Rex omnibus ad quos etc. salutem. Inspeximus litteras patentes carissimi domini et patris nostri domini Edwardi illustris Regis Angliæ et Ffranciæ primogeniti nuper principis Walliæ ducis Cornubiæ et comitis Cestriæ in hæc verba. Edwardus illustris Regis Angliæ et Ffranciæ primogenitus Princeps Walliæ dux Cornubiæ et Comes Cestriæ archiepiscopis episcopis Nevin, 1355.

[1] Interlined in MS.

abbatibus prioribus comitibus baronibus justiciariis vicecomitibus præpositis ministris et omnibus ballivis et fidelibus suis ad quos præsentes litteræ pervenerint salutem. Sciatis quod nos voluntate et assensu dilecti et fidelis nostri Nigelli de Lohareyn militis camerarii nostri cui nuper dedimus et concessimus villas de Nevyn et Purthely in North Wallia cum omnibus pertinentiis suis ad terminum vitæ suæ et per finem triginta et sex librarum nobis per communitatem hominum prædictæ villæ de Nevyn factam dedimus et concessimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris hominibus prædictæ villæ de Nevyn quod dicta villa de Nevyn[1] decetero liber burgus sit et quod homines dictum burgum inhabitantes decetero liberi sint burgenses et quod habeant gildam mercatoriam cum hansa et omnibus libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus libero burgo qualitercumque pertinentibus tales scilicet libertates et consuetudines quales burgenses nostri villæ de Neuburgh in comitatu Angleseiæ habent in burgo suo ibidem. Et quod dicti burgenses et eorum successores imperpetuum habeant et teneant ad feodi firmam de dicto Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et post ipsius decessum de nobis et heredibus nostris dictam villam cum omnibus libertatibus prædictis et aliis proficiis et pertinentiis universis salvis semper dicto Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et nobis et heredibus nostris post ipsius decessum molendinis nostris de Geyr et Goun[us] cum exitibus et pertinentiis et quadraginta solidis annui redditus debitis loco et nomine reparacionis manerii nostri ibidem annuatim. Dedimus eciam et concessimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris dictis burgensibus et successoribus suis imperpetuum quod habeant et teneant in dicta villa duas nundinas per annum unam videlicet in vigilia et festo Pentecostes et aliam in vigilia et festo Assumpcionis beatæ Mariæ. Et quod habeant mercatum ibidem die sabbati qualibet septimana imperpetuum sicut ante hæc tempora habuerunt ad quod mercatum concedimus quod gentes commoti nostri de Dynthlayn venire solebant ad mercatum supradictum. Reddendo dicto Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et nobis et heredibus nostris post ipsius decessum triginta et duas libras annuatim ad festa Paschæ et sancti Michaelis equaliter pro feodi firma prædicta et pro omnibus libertatibus et proficuis præedictis dictis duobus molendinis et annuo redditu quadraginta solidorum dicto Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et nobis et heredibus nostris post ipsius decessum ut præmittitur reservatis. Quare volumus et firmiter præcipimus et concedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod dicta villa de Neuyn decetero liber burgus sit et quod homines dictum burgum inhabitantes decetero liberi sint burgenses. Et quod habeant gildam mercatoriam cum hansa et omnibus libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus libero burgo qualitercumque pertinentibus tales scilicet libertates et consuetudines quales burgenses nostri villæ de Newburgh' in comitatu Angleseiæ habent in burgo suo ibidem. Et quod dicti burgenses et eorum successores imperpetuum habeant et teneant ad feodi firmam dictam villam cum omnibus libertatibus proficuis et pertinentiis prædictis pro triginta et duabus libris solvendis annuatim dicto videlicet Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et post ipsius decessum nobis et heredibus nostris imperpetuum in

[1] Interlined in MS.

in festum Paschæ et sancti Michaelis equaliter prædictis molendinis et annuo redditu dicto Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et post ipsius decessum nobis et heredibus nostris ut prædicitur reservatis. Et quod habeant et teneant in dicta villa duas nundinas per annum unam scilicet in vigilia et in festo Pentecostes et aliam in vigilia et festo Assumpcionis beatæ Mariæ. Et quod habeant mercatum ibidem die Sabbati qualibet septimana sicut antea habuerunt ad quod venire teneantur gentes commoti nostri de Dynthlayn et alii qui ad dictum mercatum ante hæc tempora venire consueverunt ut prædictum est. In cuius rei testimonium præsenti cartæ nostræ sigillum nostrum præsentibus est appensum. Datum apud Caern[arvon] primo die ffebruarii anno principatus nostri duodecimo. Hiis testibus Johanne de Delves, locumtenente Justiciarii nostri Northwalliæ, Roberto de Parys, camerario nostro ibidem, et aliis. Nos autem litteras prædictas et omnia contenta in eisdem rata habentes et grata ea pro nobis et heredibus nostris quantum in nobis est acceptamus approbamus et ratificamus ac præfatis hominibus de Nevyn et successoribus suis libertates et consuetudines prædictas tenore præsencium concedimus et confirmavimus prout ipsi et prædecessores sui libertatibus et consuetudinibus prædictis a tempore confectionis litterarum ipsius Principis prædictarum hucusque rationabiliter uti et gaudere consueverunt in cuius etc. Teste Rege apud Westmonasterium decimo die Marcii.

Pro viginti solidis solutis in hanaperio.

PATENT ROLL, 6 RICHARD II., p. 2, m. 12.

De confirmacione Purthely.

Rex omnibus ad quos etc. salutem. Inspeximus litteras patentes domini Edwardi illustris Regis Angliæ et Ffraunciæ primogeniti nuper Principis Walliæ ducis Cornubiæ et comitis Cestriæ in hæc verba. Edwardus illustris Regis Angliæ et Ffranciæ Primogenitus Princeps Walliæ dux Cornubiæ et Comes Cestriæ archiepiscopis episcopis abbatibus prioribus justiciariis vicecomitibus præpositis ministris et omnibus ballivis et fidelibus suis ad quos præsentes litteræ pervenerint salutem. Sciatis quod nos voluntate et assensu dilecti et fidelis nostri Nigelli de Lohareyn militis camerarii nostri cui nuper dedimus et concessimus villas de Nevyn et Purthely cum pertinentiis in North Wallia ad terminum vitæ suæ et per finem viginti et quatuor librarum nobis per communitatem hominum prædictæ villæ de Purthely factam dedimus et concessimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris dictæ villæ de Purthely quod dicta villa de Purthely de cetero liber burgus sit et quod homines dictum burgum inhabitantes de cetero liberi sint burgenses et quod habeant gildam mercatoriam cum hansa et omnibus libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus libero burgo qualitercumque pertinentibus tales scilicet libertates et consuetudines quales burgenses nostri villæ de Neuburgh' in comitatu Angles[eiæ] habent in burgo suo ibidem. Et quod prædicti burgenses et eorum successores imperpetuum habeant et teneant ad feodi firmam de

Pwllheli, 1355.

dicto Nigello ad terminum vitæ sui et post ipsius decessum de nobis et heredibus nostris dictam villam cum omnibus libertatibus prædictis et aliis proficuis et pertinentiis universis salvis semper dicto Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et nobis et heredibus nostris post ipsius decessum quadraginta solidis annui redditus debitis loco et nomine reparacionis manerii nostri ibidem annuatim. Dedimus eciam et concessimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris dictis burgensibus de Purthely et successoribus suis imperpetuum quod habeant et teneant in dicta villa duas nundinas per annum unam videlicet in vigilia et in festo Exaltacionis sanctæ Crucis et aliam in vigilia et in festo omnium sanctorum et quod habeant mercatum ibidem die dominica qualibet septimana imperpetuum sicut ante hæc tempora habuerunt ad quod mercatum concedimus quod gentes commoti nostri de Cafflogion venire teneantur et alii qui ante hæc tempora venire solebant ad mercatum supradictum. Reddendo dicto Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et nobis et heredibus nostris post ipsius decessum quatuordecim libras annuatim ad festa Paschæ et sancti Michaelis equaliter pro feodi firma prædicta et pro omnibus libertatibus et proficuis prædictis dicto annuo redditu quadraginta solidorum dicto Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et nobis et heredibus nostris post ipsius decessum ut prædicitur reservato. Quare volumus et firmiter præcepimus et concedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod dicta villa de Purthely decetero liber burgus sit et quod homines dictum burgum inhabitantes decetero liberi sint burgenses et quod habeant gildam mercatoriam cum hansa et omnibus libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus libero burgo qualitercumque pertinentibus tales sicilicet libertateset consuetudines quales burgenses nostræ villæ de Neuburgh in comitatu Angleseiæ habent in burgo suo ibidem. Et quod dicti burgenses et eorum successores imperpetuum habeant et teneant ad feodi firmam dictam villam cum omnibus libertatibus proficuis et pertinentiis prædictis pro quatuordecim libris solvendis annuatim dicto videlicet Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et post ipsius decessum nobis et heredibus nostris imperpetuum ad festa Paschæ et sancti Michaelis equalitei dicto annno redditu quadraginta solidorum dicto Nigello ad terminum vitæ suæ et nobis et heredibus nostris post ipsius decessum ut prædicitur reservato. Et quod habeant et teneant in dicta villa duas nundinas per annum unam videlicet in vigilia et in festo Exaltacionis sanctæ Crucis et aliam in vigilia et in festo omnium sanctorum et quod habeant mercatum ibidem die dominica qualibet septimana sicut antea habuerunt ad quod venire teneantur gentes commoti nostri de Cafflogion et alii qui ad dictum mercatum venire consueverunt ante hæc tempora ut prædictum est. In cuius rei testimonium præsenti cartæ nostræ sigillum nostrum est appensum. Datum apud Caernarvan quarto decimo die Ffebruarii anno principatus nostri duodecimo hiis testibus Johanne de Delves locum tenente justiciarii nostri Northwalliæ, Roberto de Parys camerario nostro ibidem, et multis aliis. Nos autem litteras prædictas et omnia contenta in eisdem rata habentes et grata ea pro nobis et heredibus nostris quantum in nobis est acceptamus approbamus et ratificamus et libertates et consuetudines prædictas præfatis hominibus de Purthely et successoribus suis tenore

præsencium concedimus et confirmamus prout ipsi et prædecessores sui libertatibus et consuetudinibus prædictis a tempore confeccionis litterarum prædictarum hucusque rationabiliter uti et gaudere consueverunt. In cuius etc. Teste Rege apud Westmonasterium vicesimo sexto die Ffeburarii.

Pro viginti solidis solutis in hanaperio.

(*b*) *Fee-Farm Charters.*

ORIGINALIA ROLL, 9 EDWARD II., m 18.

Pro burgensibus de Aberconwey.

Rex archiepiscopis etc. salutem. Sciatis nos concessisse et hac carta nostra confirmasse burgensibus nostris de Aberconwey villam illam de Aberconwey duo molendina terras et unam placeam cuiusdam molendini iuxta castrum nostrum villæ prædictæ quæ prius tenuerunt ad voluntatem nostram pro triginta et una libris tribus solidis novem denariis uno obolo et uno quadrante nobis ad scaccarium nostrum de Kaernarvan annuatim reddendis. habendum et tenendum eisdem burgensibus heredibus et successoribus suis burgensibus eiusdem villæ cum firmis redditibus et omnibus aliis exitibus proficuis et aisiamentis ad eandem villam molendina terras et placeam quoquo spectantibus de nobis et heredibus nostris ad feodi firmam imperpetuum reddendo nobis et heredibus nostris pro prædictis villa molendinis terris et placea singulis annis ad dictum scaccarium quinquaginta marcas ad duos anni terminos unam videlicet medietatem ad festum sancti Michaelis et aliam medietatem ad festum Paschæ. Quare volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod prædicti burgenses heredes et successores sui imperpetuum habeant et teneant prædicta villam molendina terras et placeam cum firmis redditibus et omnibus aliis exitibus proficuis et aisiamentis ad eandem villam molendina terras placeam quoquo modo spectantibus de nobis et heredibus nostris ad feodi firmam. Reddendo nobis et heredibus nostris pro prædictis villa molendinis terris et placea singulis annis ad dictum scaccarium quinquaginta marcas ad duos anni terminos unam videlicet medietatem ad festum sancti Michaelis et aliam medietatem ad festum Paschæ sicut prædictum est. Hiis testibus venerabilibus patribus Walteri Cantuarensi archiepiscopo tocius Angliæ primate, Johanne Norwycensi et Walteri Exonensi episcopis, Johanne de Britannia Comite Richemond', Hugone le Despenser seniore, Rogero de Mortuo Mari de Wygemor, Johanne de Crumbwell senescallo hospicii nostri et aliis. Datum per manum nostram apud Westmonasterium[1] duodecimo die Maii.

Conway, 1316.

per consilium.

[1] Interlined in MS.

ORIGINALIA ROLL, 10 EDWARD II., m. 8.

Pro burgensibus villæ de Hardelagh'.

Harlech, 1316.

Rex archiepiscopis etc. salutem. Sciatis nos concessisse et hac carta nostra confirmasse burgensibus nostris villæ nostræ de Hardelagh' in Wallia villam ipsam de Hardelagh' necnon omnia molendina nostra in commoto de Ardedou et omnia terras et tenementa in eodem commoto in manu nostra tanquam escaetam nostram existencia quæ prius tenuerunt ad voluntatem nostram pro decem et novem libris decem et octo solidis et uno obolo nobis ad scaccarium nostrum de Kaernarvan annuatim reddendis. Habendum et tenendum eisdem burgensibus heredibus[1] et successoribus suis burgensibus eiusdem villæ cum firmis redditibus et omnibus aliis exitibus proficuis et aisiamentis ad eadem villam molendina terras et tenementa quoquomodo spectantibus adeo plene sicut ea hactenus ad voluntatem nostram tenuerunt de nobis et heredibus nostris ad feodi firmam imperpetuum. Reddendo nobis et heredibus nostris per annum ad dictum scaccarium pro prædictis villa molendinis terris et tenementis viginti et duas libras unam videlicet medietatem ad festum Paschæ et aliam medietatem ad festum Sancti Michaelis. Quare volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod prædicti burgenses et heredes et successores sui imperpetuum habeant et teneant prædicta villam molendina terras et tenementa cum firmis redditibus et omnibus aliis exitibus proficuis et aisiamentis ad eadem villam molendina terras et tenementa quoquo modo spectantibus adeo plene sicut ea hactenus ad voluntatem nostram tenuerunt de nobis et heredibus nostris ad feodi firmam imperpetuum. Reddendo inde nobis et heredibus nostris per annum ad dictum scaccarium pro prædictis villa molendinis terris et tenementis viginti et duas libras unam videlicet medietatem ad festum Paschæ et aliam medietatem ad festum sancti Michaelis sicut prædictum est. Hiis testibus venerabili patre Johanne Eliensi Episcopo, Johanne de Warrena comite Surreiæ, Edmundo comite Arundelli, Rogero de Mortuo Mari de Wygemore, Hugone le Despenser Juniore, Bartholomeo de Badelesmere, Johanne de Crumbwella senescallo hospicii nostri et aliis. Datum per manum nostram apud Neuburgh' octavo die Novembris.

per ipsum Regem et consilium.

CHARTER ROLL, 5 EDWARD III., m. 29.

Pro burgensibus villæ de Bala in Penthlin.

Bala, 1331.

Rex archiepiscopis etc. salutem. Sciatis nos de gratia nostra especiali dedisse concessisse et hac carta nostra confirmasse dilectis nobis burgensibus villæ nostræ de Bala in Penthlin in comitatu de Merionnyth in Northwallia villam prædictam habendum et tenendum eisdem burgensibus et

[1] Interlined in MS.

eorum heredibus et successoribus burgensibus villæ prædictæ de nobis et heredibus nostris ad feodi firmam imperpetuum Reddendo inde nobis et heredibus nostris per annum ad scaccarium nostrum de Kaernarvan decem libras duodecim solidos unam videlicet medietatem ad dictum scaccarium nostrum Paschæ et aliam medietatem ad dictum[1] scaccarium nostrum sancti Michælis. Quare volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod prædicti burgenses ac eorum heredes et successores sui prædicti habeant et teneant villam prædictam cum pertinentiis de nobis et heredibus nostris ad feodi firmam imperpetuum Reddendo nobis ad dictum scaccarium nostrum decem libras et duodecim solidos unam videlicet medietatem ad dictum scaccarium nostrum Paschæ et aliam medietatem ad dictum scaccarium nostrum[1] sancti Michaelis. sicut prædictum est. Hiis testibus venerabilibus patribus Willelmo archiepiscopo Eboracensi Angliæ primate. thesaurario nostro, Johanne Wyntoniensi Episcopo, cancellario nostro, Johanne de Eltham comite Cornubiæ fratre nostro carissimo, Antonio de Lucy, Radulfo de Neville, senescallo hospicii nostri, et aliis. Datum per manum nostram apud Wyndesore decimo octavo die ffebruarii.

per ipsum Regem.

(c) *Other Charters.*

Carta Burgensium de Aberconwey: Leghan (Ministers' Account, General Series, Bundle 1171, No. 11, m. 7*d*).

Edwardus *et cetera.* Archiepiscopis abbatibus comitibus baronibus justiciariis vicecomitibus præpositis ministris et ballivis suis ad quos præsentes litteræ pervenirent salutem. Sciatis quod dedimus et concessimus et hac præsenti carta nostra confirmavimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris burgensibus nostris villæ nostræ de Aberconwey omnes terras villenagias[2] in villa de Leghan in commoto de Issaph, habendum et tenendum eisdem burgensibus heredibus et successoribus suis burgensibus eiusdem villæ dictas terras tenentibus cum pratis pascuis et pasturis boscis turbariis et cum omnibus aliis pertinentiis suis proficuis et aysiamentis quibuscunque adeo libere sicut iidem burgenses nostri terras seu tenementa sua in villa nostra de Aberconwey prædicta de nobis et heredibus nostris ad feodi firmam imperpetuum reddendo inde nobis et heredibus nostris quolibet anno imperpetuum ad scaccarium nostrum de Caernarvon centum et decem et octo solidos ad festa Paschæ et sancti Michaelis equaliter pro omnimodis serviciis exactionibus et demandis. Quare volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod prædicti burgenses nostri heredes et successores sui imperpetuum habeant et teneant omnes terras villinagias[3] in villa de Thleghan in commoto de Issaph cum pratis pascuis pasturis boscis turbariis et omnibus aliis pertinentiis suis pro-

[1] Interlined in MS. [2] MS. *vilniaĝ.* [3] *Sic* in MS.

ficuis et aysiamentis quibuscunque adeo libere sicut iidem burgenses nostri terras seu tenementa sua in villa nostra de Aberconwey prædicta tenent de nobis et heredibus nostris ad feodi firmam imperpetuum. Reddendo nobis et heredibus nostris quolibet anno imperpetuum ad scaccarium nostrum de Caernarvon centum et decem et octo solidos ad festa Paschæ et sancti Michaelis equaliter pro omnimodis serviciis exactionibus demandis ut prædictum est. In cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes. Datum apud Caernarvon vicesimo die Martis anno Principatus duodecimo. Hiis testibus Johanne de Delves, locumtenente Justiciarii Northwalliæ, Nicholas Pynnok uno auditore compoti ministrorum nostrorum, Roberto de Parys camerario nostro Northwalliæ et multis aliis.

Per breve de privato sigillo.

MINISTERS' ACCOUNT 1171, No. 8.

Grant, dated 28th October 1351, *by the Black Prince to the burgesses of Carnarvon of an attermination for a debt of* £100, *also of two new fairs yearly.*

Pro hominibus villæ de Caernarvan de atterminacione centum librarum et duabus novis nundinis. Edward eisnz filz etc. A notre cher vadlet Johan de Delves lieutenant nostre Justice de Northgales et a notre cher clerc mestre Robard Pollard chamberlein illeoques saluz. Por ce que nous de nostre grace et par avis de nostre conseil avons grauntez a nos burgeis de la ville de Caernarvan estallement de les cent livers que vous demandes de eux en nostre noun, la quele summe monsieur Edward iadys Roi Dengleterre nostre Besaiel, qi deux lassoille, lour apresta pur la dite ville reedifier au temps qele estoit arse. A paier eut a nous vint marcs par an en nostre Escheqer de Carnarvan a les festes del Annunciacion nostre dame et de seynt Michel par oweles porcions tantqe la dite summe de cent livers nous soit purpaiee. Vous mandons qe cel esballement lour seoffrez avoir en la manere avandite. Dautre part parce qe noz ditz Burgeis nous ount requis qe nous lours voilleiens graunter qils puissent avoir dieux feires par an a la dite ville, ceste assavoir a les festes de Seynt Johan ante portam Latinam et de seinte Katerine, quele requeste nous lour avons, par avis de nostre conseil, tantbien pur notre profite come en avantage de eux, octroies. Vous mandons qe souz nostre seal, quel vous nostre dit chamberlein avez en garde, lour facetz faire sur cele notre graunt lettres patentes en due fourme. Et ce ne lessez. Done sous nostre prive seal a Londres le xxvij jour Doctobre lan du regne nostre Trescher seignur et piere le Roi Dengleterre vintisme quint et de Ffrance duszime.

II. SELECT DOCUMENTS

ANCIENT PETITIONS (P.R.O.), No. 2803. (*Temp.* EDWARD I.)

The poor burgesses of Llanvaes refer Edward I. to the liberties granted them by the charters of the Welsh princes.

Regiæ majestati demonstrant fideles sui nunc pauperes burgenses de Lanmaes universi quod ad præsens multis gravaminibus sunt opressi nam libertatibus eis per cartas principum concessis et postmodum per regiam clemenciam suam gratiam confirmatis nunc penitus sunt privati. Ita quod emere nec vendere possunt modo consueto nec naves portum dictæ villæ applicare permittuntur nec pro domibus suis ad villam de Bello Marisco asportatis est aliquod eis adhuc persolutum mandato Regis pro hoc faciendo non obstante. Eciam de pascuis et aliis necessariis eis et animalibus suis penitus sunt exclusi. Ideo regiæ clemenciæ ac eius misericordiæ ineffabili supplicant dicti pauperes ut super præmissis dei amore ac pro animæ suæ remedio sic aliquod duxerit ordinandum quod aliis infringere non liceat et ipsi possint vivere quiete dictis gravaminibus cessantibus sint et alii ubi nunc sunt vel alibi secundum quod Regiæ discretioni videatur expedire.

[ENDORSED]

Scribatur justiciario quod certificet Regi quare non est eis satisfactum pro domibus suis.

ANCIENT PETITIONS (P.R.O.), No. 1981. (*Temp. circa* 1316.)

The burgesses of Conway ask to farm their town and the mills of Giffyn at a round sum.

A nostre seignur le Roi, qi Dieu gard, e a son consail prient ses burges de Coneweye quil voelle grauntier a eaux la dite vile ode les molyns de Gyffyn a ferme, rendant par an ij marz de encres, outre ceo quil ount rendu au Roi jusques en ceo, si nostre dit seignur le Roi ne les pleise retenier en sa mien demeigne.

Si sit ad dampnum Justiciarii North Walliæ, si Rex dimittat petita, simul cum incremento in peticione oblato, et certificet et interim tradat, etc.

ANCIENT PETITIONS (P.R.O.), No. 3925. (*Temp.* EDWARD III.)

The free tenants of North Wales complain of the extortion of the King's ministers there, and ask that the castle stores be purchased at a fair price in the local markets.

Petunt liberi tenentes vestri Northwalliæ et pauperes quod non capiantur eorum bona non venalia contra eorum voluntates ad instaurandum castra vestra nec ad sustentacionem justiciarii seu aliorum ministrorum vestrorum sicut nec fieri consuevit temporibus principum Walliæ nec patris vestri

cuius animæ propicietur deus. Sed in communibus nundinis et aliis mercatis parcium illarum de bonis vestris et wagiis ministrorum vestrorum prædictorum iidem ministri vestri blada animalia et alia necessaria pro ipsis et castris vestris emant pro iusto precio et ibidem aliis proferantur quia talis extorcio galensibus est minus onerosa et omnino intollerabilis de qua petunt remedium.

[Endorsed]

Mandetur justiciario Northwalliæ quod non permittat prisas fieri aliter quam fieri consueverunt temporibus retroactis et secundum quod de iure et consuetudine partium illarum fieri consueverunt et si qui de huiusmodi prisis conqueri voluerint illos audiat et eis faciat debitum et festinum iusticiæ complementum.

Ancient Petitions (P.R.O.), No. 13,029. (*Temp.* Edward iii. *post* 1343, *ante* 1376.)

The English burgesses in North Wales beg that their liberties be observed, and point out the danger of Welsh juries.

A nostre seignur le Roi et a son sage conseil monstrent les Burgeis Engleis de les villes burghes engleis en Northgales qe come le tresnoble seignur le Roi Edward ael nostre seignur le Roi qorest frechement sur sa conquest du Gales ordeigna par son sage conseil villes burghes en Northgales cest assavoir Caernarvan Conewey Beomarreis Cruckuth Hardelagh Bala Rothelan et Flynt et Burgeis engleis denhabiter les dits villes graunte diverses franchises et libertes a les dits Burgeis illeoqes par diverses chartres eut faits severalment a chescune ville par lui des villes susdit en meintenaunce et relevacione des dits villes et Burgeis entre queux il lour granta qils neo serreint convicts par nuls gents foreins sur ascunz appelles rettes injuries trespases crimes chalangs et demands a eux surmys en a surmettrez estre faits deinz certeinz bunds contenuz en les dits chartres les queux chartres le roi Edward pier nostre seignur le roi qorest et nostre seignur le Roi qorest et son trescher filz le Prince leur seignur par les chartres eut confermez a chescune ville severalment, nepurqant les ministres lour treshonore seignur le Prince, devant ces hures la ou ascune des dits Burgeis ont este enditez des choses supposez estre faits deinz les bunds contenuz en les dits chartres ont sursis d'aler[1] a deliveraunce dascunne de eux par lours comburgeis solunt la tenure les dits chartres et conferments et unquore sursessent a la foiez por ceo qe ascune de eux estoit ministre lour sit seignur le Prince as temps des points susditz supposez par acusements ou enditements estre faits deinz les dits bunds, et alafoiez par autre cause a graunte arerisment de les ditz gents engleis pur qi plese a nostre seigneur le Roi en meintenance et relevacione et eide des villes et Burgeis susdits comandier briefs a son treshonore filz le Prince lour seignur as Justices de Northgales et Cestre ou a les lieutenants des dits Justices qeu cas qe ascun des dits

[1] Interlined in MS.

Burgeis soit il ministre leur dit seignur le Prince ou noun soit endite ou arette sur ascuns appelles rettes injuries ou autre point contenu deinz lour dits chartres quelle est suppose estre fait deinz les bounds contenuz deinz les dits chartres[1] qe chescune de eux soit delivres par ses comburgeis de quelle des villes susdits il soit et qe touz les franchises et libertes en les dits chartres soient alowez solunt la tenure des dites chartres et confermements. Sachant qe si les Burgeis avant ditz fusent areinez des ascunz des points avant ditz et dusent passer par les bouches et serments des galeis il neo . . . [2]rreit nulle engleis en Gales en vie deinz brief temps ou il coviendreit voider le paies, quelle chose neo serroit profite . . .[2] neo a sa coronne.

[Endorsed]
Sort fait.

Ancient Petitions (P.R.O.), No. 13,936. (*Temp.* Edward iii.)

The burgesses of Beaumaris complain that the Welshmen of Anglesea persist in trading outside the market of their town.

A nostre seignur le Roi et a son conseil mustrent ses Burgeys de la ville de Beaumareys qe les gentz galeys du conte Dangleseye vendent et achatent et tiegnent leur marches entre eux et sustreent du marche de la dite ville en despit et damage du Roi et de ses Burgeys susditz car le Roi pert son tonou et les ditz burgeys ne poent marchander ne faire lour acatz des choses necessaries pur sustenance deux et de la dite ville auxi come il soleient et prient pur dieu qe cieux ventes et acatz de hors la ville soient defendutz issint qe les ditz galeys veignent ove lour choses vendables a la dite ville et que le marche illoeques soit tenutz et meyntenutz auxi come soleit estre et auncienement[3] fust ardine.

[Endorsed]
Mandetur Justiciario quod non homines partium Ang. . . .[4] ere mercatum alibi . . .[4] prædicta et eis pr. . . .[4] cum bonis et rebus . . .[4] veniant ad i[dem merc[4]]atum et non alibi n . . .[4] edictis.

Additional Charter (Brit. Mus.), No. 8642.[5]

Certificate of burgess-ship in the town of Newborough to one Madoc ap Hoell ap Madoc. 1426.

Universis et singulis ad quos præsentes litteræ pervenerunt Mered' ap Ken Aldermon Gruff' ap Jokes et Teg' Porthwys' ballivi et tota communitas burgensium villæ de Newburgh in comitatu Anglesiæ salutem

[1] Interlined in MS. [2] Indenture in MS. [3] Interlined in MS.
[4] The writing on the dorse is partially covered by the repairs done to the document.
[5] [Endorsed: Purchased at Faussett's Sale 25 Feb. 1854. Lot 220.]

æternam in domino. Noverit universitas vestra quod nos ex unanimi consensu et assensu concessimus et recepimus ex fideli industria et amicitia speciali Mad' ap Hoell' ap Mad' in comburgens[iam] nostram villæ prædictæ concedentes eidem Mad' et heredibus suis de corpore suo legitime procreatis et procreandis omnia privilegia et libertates nostra quæ nos habuimus habemus vel in futuro habuerimus imperpetuum concedentes et eciam admittentes prædicto Mad' et heredibus suis de corpore suo legitime procreatis et procreandis huius privilegia et libertates quantum in nobis est gaudere et uti imperpetuum ita quod pro comburgensibus nostris villæ prædictæ et in gilda nostra receptis de cetero quocumque loco reputentur et acceptentur. In cuius rei testimonium sigillum commune villæ prædictæ præsentibus fecimus apponi. Datum apud Neuburgh vicessimo die Marcii anno regni regis Henrici sexti[1] quarto etc.

[Seal pendant.][2]

The Carnarvon Deed of 1430.[3]

We, John de Stanley Kt. constable of the castle of Carnarvon, and Mayor of the same town, Thomas Dankinson alderman, Richard Brodhede and John Hulkyn, bailiffs of the Liberty of the same town, and the whole community of the aforesaid town, grant, at fee farm, to Thomas Bowman, his heirs and assigns, one burgage and its appurtenances.

Sciant præsentes et futuri quod nos Johannes de Stanley armiger constabularius castri de Caernarvan et maior eiusdem villæ Thomas Dankinson aldermanus[4] eiusdem villæ Ricardus Brodhede et Johannes Hulkyn ballivi libertatis eiusdem villæ et tota communitas villæ prædictæ dedimus et hac præsenti carta nostra ad feodi firmam concessimus Thomæ Bowmon' heredibus et assignatis suis unum burgagium cum pertinentiis situatum inter burgagium capellæ beatæ Mariæ quod Ricardus Broun modo tenet ex parte orientali et aliam stratam que ducitur versus capellam maiorem in longitudine ex parte occidentali habendum et tenendum prædictum burgagium cum pertinentiis præfato Thomæ Bowmon' heredibus et assignatis suis imperpetuum tenendum de capitalibus dominis feodi illius per servicia inde debita et de iure consueta reddendo annuatim communitati eiusdem villæ quinque solidos argenti ad festa Paschæ et sancti Michaelis per equales porciones. Et si contingat prædictum redditum quinque solidorum aretro esse in parte vel in toto non solutum ad festa supradicta tunc bene liceat præfatæ communitati in

[1] '4 H. 7.' appears in a modern hand on the dorse of the document. On first reading the MS. *sext*^{i} looks very much like *sept*^{i}, but on closer examination the p bears no resemblance to the normal *p* form of the document.

[2] Red: injured by pressure, and the edge imperfect. 1½ inches. On the sea a ship with one mast, mainsail set, high at each end, castles, crow's nest, and split flag at the masthead. SIGILLU: COMUNITATIS: DE: NEUBURGH: Beaded borders (*Catalogue of Seals in British Museum*, vol. ii. p. 135).

[3] Taken from a facsimile in Breeze's *Kalendars of Gwynedd*.

[4] *Sic* in MS.

prædicto burgagio cum pertinentiis distringere et districtiones sic captas abducere asportare et penes se retinere quousque de prædicto redditu simul cum arreragiis siquæ fuerint præfatæ communitati plenarie fuerit satisfactum. Et si contingat prædictum redditum quinque solidorum aretro esse in parte vel in toto ad aliquod festum prædictum non solutum et nulla districtio in prædicto burgagio inveniri contigerit tunc bene liceat præfatæ communitati in prædicto burgagio cum pertinentiis intrare et rehabere et in pristino statu suo retinere hac dimissione et concessione in aliquibus non obstantibus. In cuius rei testimonium huic præsenti cartæ nostræ sigillum nostrum commune apposuimus. Datum apud Caernarvan vicesimo die Aprilis anno regni Regis Henrici sexti post conquestum Angliæ octavo.

ANCIENT PETITIONS (P.R.O.), No. 9093. (*Temp.* 1507-9.)

The results of Henry VII.'s great charter to the burgesses of Bala.

TO THE KYNG OURE SOVERAIN LORDE.

In the moost humble wise sheweth unto youre highnes your humble tenauntz and Subgiettes the Burges of your Towne of Bala withynne your Shyre of Meryonnyth in Northwalles that where as heretofore there hath beene yerely charged of ffee ferme upone your seide tenauntz paiable by the handes of the Baillis there for the tyme beyng unto your xiij*l.* xiijs. iij*d.*
escheyquyer of Carnervane whereof there is due upon the landes there iij*l.* vj*d.* as by the Rentals there in tymes past appereth more at large the residue of the seide ffeeferne whereof greter parte is levied[1] of the Tolle Stallage and other customes granted unto thayme and used heretofore. So it is moost gracious lorde that youre grace nowe of late hath pardoned the seid Tolle and Stallage and other customes levied[1] withyn the seid Shire of Meryonnyth whereupon the residue of the said ferme[1] was wont to be leveyed in tymes past[1] and thereof clerely discharged thenhabitantes there as by the grete charter by your highnes to the Comonaltie of Walsshemen in those parties late graunted ~~and~~ [*sic*] more playnly it may appere wherfor it may pleas your noble grace graciously consideryng the premissis eyther to see that your said Subgiettes may peasebly levy the seid Tolle Stallage and other customes levable in tymes past without interupcione or lett or elles that they may pay yerely the said
anuell rent dewe
iij*l.* vj*d.* for the said lands as apperes in the patent[1] and to be discharged of the residue and aforeytmes levable of the seid casuelties as ryght and goode conscience requireth and as other be entreted being in like caas in thees partes. And they shall pray for youre moost noble grace theire lives enduryng.

[1] Interlined in MS.

B. LISTS AND TABLES COMPILED FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES

(*a*) Tabular Analysis of the Court, Market, and Kiltoll Profits of each Borough, 1254-1536.

CARNARVON.

Date.	Tolls. Fairs. (1) July 25.	Tolls. Fairs. (2) Sept. 29.	Tolls. Market.	Tolls. Port.	Perquisites. Three Weeks' Court.	Perquisites. View of Frankpledge.	Perquisites. Piepowder.	Perquisites. Market and Fair Courts.	Perquisites. Assize of Bread and Beer.	Authority. Min. Acc.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
1303-4	(2) 4 11 2¾	..	0 8¼	..	..	..	..	£3 9 4		1211/2
1304-5	1 19 0	..	6 8	2 2	0 14 0	0 6 1	3 0	4 0	..	1170/4
1305-6	(2) 0 7 3¼	..	2 2	3 0	0 14 8	0 7 7	2 7	..	..	,,
1306-7	2 3 2½	1 16 6¾	6 2	2 4	0 17 0	0 14 3	0 6	..	..	1170/5
1309-10	1 13 5	1 15 0	6 10	0 3	0 15 4	0 10 3	0 4	8 1	..	1170/6
1310-11	(2) 2 14 6½	..	7 0	1 0	(4) 1 7 4	..	..	..	..	1121/3
1311-12	(2) 3 18 1	..	6 6	1 4	(4) 1 8 6	..	..	..	..	1211/4
1312-13	2 1 0½	2 2 0½	3 3½	5 8	1 5 4	0 6 2	14 5	7 7	..	1170/7
1313-14	1 15 0	2 0 4	4 4	1 6	0 15 5	1 6 4	8 9	7 10	..	1170/8
1314-15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..		£8 (total)	1170/9
1316-17	1 14 9	2 10 0	16 4½	1 4	0 16 8	2 2 10	10 9	7 6	..	1170/10
1317-18	0 13 4	2 15 6	6 8	0 4	0 6 4	0 5 0	1 6	3 4	..	1170/11, 12
(½) 1319-20	1 7 11	..	1 1	1 0	0 4 0	0 9 4	2 0	3 0	4 4	1170/1
1320-21	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	£7 3 8 (total)	1170/2
1321-22	(2) 1 12 0	..	8 0	..	0 12 6	1 1 0	2 0	10 0	..	1170/13
1322-23	£2 0 10		..	..	..	£3 3 0		..	..	1170/14
(½) 1323-24	0 10 1		..	..	..	0 10 1		..	..	1170/15
1324-25	0 15 2	0 16 2½	5 1	1 4	0 13 1	0 12 0	6 1	..	2 3	1170/16
1325-26	0 15 3½	0 16 3	5 8½	1 4	0 3 10	0 18 0	9 8	13 0	..	1170/17
1327-28	£4 7 0		..	2 4	..	£3 0 3		..	..	1213/3
1328-29	(2) 2 14 2	..	6 4	1 0	0 4 11	0 10 11	19 0	4 4	..	1170/19
1330-31	£1 18 10½		..	..	..	£1 0 7		..	..	1213/8
1330-31 (½)	..	1 0 0	3 4	1 0	0 1 10	0 4 7	6 4	1 10	..	1171/1
1332-33	.. 1 0 0		..	1 4	..	£2 9 3		..	..	1213/10
1333-34	.. 0 17 7		..	1 0	..	1 19 0		..	..	1213/5
1334-35	..	..	..	0 8	0 3 1	..	2 7	7 10	..	1171/2
1335-36	(2) 2 2 0	..	3 6	0 4	0 1 6	0 18 11	2 4	2 10	..	1171/3
1337-38	£1 8 7		..	0 8	..	£1 12 0		..	..	1213/11
1338-39	(2) 1 1 0	..	2 2	0 8	0 5 1	0 14 2	7 7	14 10	..	1171/4
1340-41	£1 2 2		..	0 8	..	£2 1 8		..	..	1213/12
1344-45	1 17 3		..	1 0	..	2 0 4		..	..	1214/1
1345-46 (½)	0 10 0		..	0 10	..	0 17 10		..	..	1171/5
1346-47	0 5 2	0 8 9	..	0 7	0 3 8	0 11 10	14 9	..	..	1171/6
1351-52	(2) 2 12 5	..	12 5	..	1 11 3	1 0 0	7 1	..	..	1171/7
1352-53	(4) 2 13 4	..	7 9	..	2 10 11	1 18 6	1 9	10 6	..	1171/8
1353-54	Tolls and perquisites are farmed at one round sum from this year onwards (1354-1536).[1]									1171/9
1536										Henry VIII.

CRICCIETH.

Date.	Tolls.			Perquisites.			Authority. — Min. Acc.
	Fairs.		Market.	Three Weeks' Court.	View of Frank-pledge.	Market and Fair Courts.	
	Apr. 25.	Oct. 18.					
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*	
1309-10	£0 9 9		7 2¾	4 0	8 6	..	1170/6
1310-11	0 14 2¾		4 1½	£0 5 1		..	1211/3
1311-12	0 19 7½		3 10½	0 13 3		..	1211/4
1312-13	1 7 0		0 5½	0 4 8		..	1211/5
1313-14	0 14 4		3 0	6 10	4 0	*Nil.*	1170/8
1314-15	..		..	..	..	30 5½ (total)	1170/9
1316-17	..		..	..	..	35 5½ ,,	1170/10
1317-18	..		..	..	..	35 0 ,,	1170/11, 12
1319-20 (½)	..		..	..	..	18 0 ,,	1170/1
1320-21	..		.	..	..	36 0 ,,	1170/2
1321-22	£0 19 3¾				£0 20	6	1170/13
1322-23	0 12 5½				0 15	0	1170/14
1323-24	.. 6 9		..		0 3	6	1170/15
1324-25	4 3½	3 1½	2 1½	3 4	2 6	1 2	1170/16
1325-26	2 2¾	2 2½	0 10	2 9	2 0	0 3	1170/17
1327-28	£0 4 3				£0 6	5	1213/3
1328-29	£0 10 0		1 2	2 1	2 3	0 6	1170/19
1329-30	..	..	..	1 7	2 3	0 6	Ct. Roll 285/54
1330-31	£0 1 6				£0 4	0	1171/1
1331-32	..	..	..	1 3	2 0	0 3	Ct. Roll 255/53
1332-33	..	..	..	..	..	14 4 (total)	1213/10
1333-34	£0 5 5				£0 3	6	1213/5
1334-35	£0 2 9		1 1½		0 4	4	1171/2
1335-36	0 6 11½		1 5	3 6	8 8	..	1171/3
1337-38	..	..	..	..	..	18 7 (total)	1213/11
1338-39	*Nil.*	2 8	1 6½		£0 5	5	1171/4
1339-40 (½)	£0 4 2½ (*sic*)				0 5	5 (*sic*)	1213/13
1344-45	..	..	..	..	..	6 7¾ (total)	1214/1
1345-46	.. 0 3 7½		0 7½		£0 2	3	1214/3
1346-47 (½)	0 1 9¾			0 3	..	..	1171/5
1351-52	14 7¾	6 8	1 1½	3 4	2 2	..	1171/7
1352-53	6 0	21 0	1 2	4 6	1 6	..	1171/8
1353-1536	The tolls and perquisites are arrented.[1]						1171/9—Henry VIII.

[1] See chap. v., sec. 2, as to their value.

CONWAY.

Date.	Tolls.				Perquisites.				Authority. — Min. Acc.
	Fairs.		Market.		Port.	Three Weeks' Court.	View of Frank-pledge.	Piepowder.	Market and Fair Courts.	
	Aug. 24.	Oct. 28.	Conway.	Gannock.						
	£ s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	
1301 (½)	1 8 8	..	3 7	5 1	..	0 10 6	..	..	..	Court Roll 215/48
1304-5	1 10 0¼	5 6	9 1¾	9 6¾	2 8	0 13 0	5 0	0 6 10	..	Min. Acc. 1170/3
1305-6	1 9 1	5 9¾	9 0¼	11 7½	1 4	0 15 6	6 0	3 1 0	..	1170/3
1306-7 (½)	1 13 2	10 10	..	4 3	..	1 9 1	5 0	1 15 6	..	1170/4
1307-8	1 6 8	10 0	6 8	5 0	6 8	0 16 6	5 0	1 11 6	3 6	1170/5
1309-10	1 10 3½	7 0¾	10 5½	4 8¾	7 4	1 9 0	10 6	1 1 0	4 0	1170/6
1310-11	£0 19	10½	5 0	9 1	12 6	..	£0	61 2	..	1211/3
1311-12	1 0	2¼	£0 24	6	13 4	..	3	3 4	..	1211/4
1312-13	1 0 2½	5 7½	6 4½	5 2¾	7 4	1 7 7	8 0	0 17 10	5 10	1170/7
1313-14	0 16 1½	7 7½	7 9¼	8 4½	7 8	1 8 3	6 6	0 16 5	5 10	1170/8
1314-15	..	..	..	..	6 4	..	..	£4 9	2	1170/9
1315-16 — 1536	The Conway burgesses hold their borough at fee-farm.									Henry VIII.

NEVIN.[1]

Date.	Tolls.	Perquisites.		Authority. — Min. Acc.
		Three Weeks' Court.	View of Frank-pledge.	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
1468-9	17 9	7 4	3 0	1181/1
1472-3	2 0	10	0	1181/2
1473-4	2 2	10	5	1181/4
1474-5	2 2	10	5	1181/5

[1] See chap. v., sec. 2, as to the general character of the Nevin accounts.

PWLLHELI.[1]

Date.	Tolls.	Perquisites.	Authority. — Min. Acc.
	s. d.	£ s. d.	
1448-9	13 4	2 1 10	1179/1

[1] See chap. v., sec. 2.

HARLECH.

Date.	Tolls.			Perquisites.	Authority. — Min. Acc.
	Fairs.		Market.		
	July.	November.			
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
1304-5	£4	14 0	5 0	18 3	1211/2
1305-6	2 15 0	1 19 0	5 0	—[1]	1170/3
1310-11	£5	14 10	5 6	8 0	1211/3
1311-12	5	14 6	5 6½	—	1211/4
1312-13	5	16 5½	..	8 6	1211/5
1313-14	2 3 0¾	2 10 2¾	10 1	*Nil.*	1170/8
1314-15	..	..	..	(Total) £2 19 1¾	1170/9
1315-16	..	..	..	(Total) £6 1 6	1170/10
1316-1536	The burgesses hold their borough at fee-farm.[2]				1170/11 Henry VIII.

[1] Account incomplete. [2] See chap. v., sec. 2.

BALA.[1]

Date.	Perquisites.	Authority.
1322	2 Great Tourns (5s. 6d.)	Court Roll 227/22
1323	1 Great Tourn (4s. 8d.)	Court Roll 227/23

[1] See chap. v., sec. 2.

BEAUMARIS.

Date.	Tolls.			Perquisites.				Authority.
	Fairs.		Market.	Port.	Three Weeks' Court.	View of Frank-pledge.	Pie-powder.	Market and Fair Courts.	Min. Acc.
	April.	Sept.							
1303-4	£ s. d.	£3 14 4	s. d. 14 0	s. d. ..	£ s. d. ..	£ s. d. ..	s. d. £2 15 10 (total)	s. d.	1211/2
1306-7	1 2 2	3 0 3	10 11	..	2 2 10	1 14 4	4 0	..	1170/5
1309-10	0 10 0	3 0 2	10 3	..	1 18 9	0 8 10	6 0	..	1170/6
1310-11	£3 1 3		11 3	..	£2 9 6		..	..	1211/3
1311-12	3 4 8½		10 0	..	1 18 4		..	..	1211/4
1312-13	0 10 0	2 13 0	10 5	..	1 9 4	0 6 0	10 5	2 5	1170/7
1313-14	0 8 4	2 5 8½	6 9	..	1 11 8	0 5 9	..	3 9	1170/8
1314-15	..	..	..	..	..	..	£5 13 1½ (total)		1170/9
1316-35	..	..	..	..	..	..	7 16 8½ ,,		1170/10-19; 1171/1-2
1335-36	£4 0 6½		15 8¾	..	0 12 2	0 4 6	£0 10 0		1171/3
1338-39	2 1 0		4 4	..	0 10 3	0 7 6	4 8	..	1171/4
1339-40 (½)	..	..	..	..	..	..	£4 9 7 (total)		1213/13
1344-45	..	..	..	..	..	..	5 1 11 ,,		1214/1
1345-46 (½)	..	..	..	*Nil.*	..	..	0 11 6 ,,		1214/3
1346-47 (½)	£1 13 8		..	1 2	..	..	0 4 9		1171/5
1351-52	2 1 0		2 1	*Nil.*	0 13 6	1 4 10	2 7	4 2	1149/1
1352-53	1 5 8		1 6	4 2	0 15 2	0 11 0	2 11	..	1149/2
1353-57	..	..	..	..	..	..	£5 3 4		1149/3
1357-58	1 19 0		2 6	3 0	0 19 0	0 7 8	2 7	5 9	1149/7
1358-59	2 6 0		2 4	..	0 18 10	0 7 10	0 9	1 6	1149/8
1359-1536	The tolls and perquisites are farmed.[1]								1150/1—Henry VIII.

[1] See chap. v., sec. 2, for the divers variations of the yearly farm.

NEWBOROUGH. (See chap. v., sec. 2, *re* profits of this borough.)

Date.	Tolls.			Perquisites.				Authority.
	Fairs.		Market.	Three Weeks' Court.	View of Frank-pledge.	Pie-powder.	Market and Fair Courts.	Min. Acc.
	June 29.	Nov. 11.						
1303-4	£ s. d. ..	£ s. d. 2 1 6½	£ s. d. 2 19 3	£ s. d. 2 1 5	£ s. d. 0 15 3	s. d. 1 6	s. d. 1 0	1170/3
1304-5	£4 4 9½		..	0 10 10	0 8 9	..	..	,, & 1211/2
1408-9	2 0 4		*Nil.*	2 17 7	4 2 9	..	..	1152/4
1459-60	0 14 8		..	1 0 8	0 4 0	..	..	1154/4

(*b*) A Chronological List of the Extant Court Rolls of the North Welsh Boroughs, 1284-1536.

Official Reference (P.R.O.).	Date.	Name of Borough.	Number of Courts recorded.				
			Three Weeks' Court.	Great Tourns and View of Frank-pledge.	Fair Courts.	Pie-powder.	Assize of Bread.
Court Rolls, Portf. 215/48	1301	Conway	7	..	..	..	..
Min. Acc. 1170/3	1304	Conway	16	2	..	Number not specified	..
Min. Acc. 1170/3	1305	Conway	16	2	..	,,	..
Court Rolls, Portf. 215/46	1322	Carnarvon	15	2	2	3	..
Court Rolls, Portf. 215/53	1322	Criccieth	15	..	2	1	..
Court Rolls, Portf. 227/22	1322	Bala	..	2	..	..	..
Court Rolls, Portf. 227/23	1324	Bala	..	1	..	..	..
Min. Acc. 1170/16	1325	Carnarvon	16	2	2	6	2
Min. Acc. 1170/16	1325	Criccieth	17	2	2	..	..
Court Rolls, Portf. 215/47	1326	Carnarvon	16	2	2	5	..
Court Rolls, Portf. 215/53	1326-7	Criccieth	17	2	2	..	..
Court Rolls, Portf. 215/54	1329	Criccieth	13	2	2	..	..
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